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THE MYSTERIES OF GOD.

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P.H.S. was an old friend of the Soltau family - a great naturalist as well as Bible student -

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THE MYSTERIES OF GOD:

A SERIES OF EXPOSITIONS OF HOLY SCRIPTURE.

BY

PHILIP HENRY GOSSE, F.R.S.

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MDCCCLXXXIV.

"We have received, not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit which is of God; in order that we may know the things that are freely given to us of God. Which things also we speak, not in the words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Spirit teacheth, discerning spiritual [things] by spiritual [faculties]."—1 Cor. ii. 12, 13.

PREFACE.

THESE Essays are addressed, expressly and solely, to Believers; by which term I mean, not merely such persons as assent, philosophically, to the truth of God's existence, and of the Bible as being his Word, but such as, on the authority of that Word, have come to Christ as lost sinners, and rested on Him for personal salvation. They deal with subjects of high importance, revealed in the Holy Scriptures, but either imperfectly apprehended, or little thought of, by the majority of Christians.

An effort is here made, in the fear of God, to search for heavenly Wisdom, as for hid treasures, beneath the surface of the Word; to examine the Lively Oracles, as with a microscope; persuaded that they will be found well worthy of the closest research. The earlier Essays may seem, to some, abstruse; and may be thought to be mere idle speculations. But, if carefully

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weighed, I hope they will be found to rest on the revealed mind of God, in every particular: they aim to carry matters up to their Source; and the principles therein announced pervade the whole volume; viz. the distinguishing Grace of God to Man; not his benevolence only, as outflowing to all his creatures, but his peculiar Love, extended, in a measure exceeding our highest comprehension, to the human race, even "before eternal times."

I have advanced nothing, I have anticipated nothing, on mere speculation. On such themes as these, speculation is to be deprecated:—"the Lord knoweth the thoughts of man, that they are vanity." For every statement that I have made, I have aimed to rest on the inspired Word: I have desired strictly to limit myself to the elucidation of what is written in the Book. Nor are those passages any exception to this sober rule, in which I seek to explore the Destiny of the Earth, and of Man upon it; since I have laboured only to elicit the expressed Purpose of God, or the results which appear inevitably to flow from his Revelations. Far more may be confidently gathered from his words of weight than is patent to those who read carelessly and cursorily; or to those whose thoughts run only in traditional grooves; or to those, even,

whose aim extends not beyond personal comfort, or personal improvement.

This constant reference to the very words of the Holy Ghost, will, I trust, plead my apology for what may seem a dogmatic tone. As his trumpet gives no uncertain sound, so, as the whole tenour of Scripture shows, believers are expected to know, with confidence, the things which are freely given to them of God. "We have the mind of Christ."

I assume the unerring verity of Divine Revelation in the Scriptures. My position is that of an expositor. There is a school of theology, finding much favour in these days, which rests on the assumed competency of man to judge, *à priori*, what is, or is not, in accordance with the character of God; with God's essential Righteousness, or God's Love. Thus some doctrines of peculiar solemnity, taught, in no indirect manner, by the lips of the Blessed Son of God himself, are depreciated, nicknamed, and denied, by this school, because of their assumed incompatibility with the character of God,—a God, after all, of their own making. I must test doctrine by the direct statements of Scripture, not by what I think worthy of God, or likely to have come from Him; for I can know absolutely nothing of the moral character of God, except as He has

revealed Himself in the Scripture. Nor am I anxious to find any close parallelism between the Laws of the Heavenly and the Laws of the Earthly. I am content to rest everything on Authority:—the authority, however, of God, with whom "it is impossible to lie." I am content to be *homo unius libri*.

The credentials of Scripture constitute, of course, an anterior inquiry, of supreme importance. God never asks faith without evidence. The Scribes, bitterly inimical as they were, would have had no sin in rejecting the claims of Jesus, as He himself declares (John xv. 23, 24), if He had not presented the evidence of his unparalleled works. So has He given *us* the crowning Sign of Jonas the Prophet,—his own Resurrection,—on which our faith may stand immovable.

In quoting Holy Scripture, I have, in some cases, deviated from the words of our venerable Authorized Version, translating for myself, direct from the original. To some readers I fear this may be offensive; so dear, so sacred, is the very language to which they have been accustomed:—a feeling with which I have myself strong sympathy, imprinted as the words of even very many entire chapters are on my own tenacious memory, from earliest childhood, almost without

the least verbal break. Yet, beautiful as the language is, "the music of its cadences and the felicities of its rhythm," are of little importance, compared with the meaning. When it is God that speaks, the main consideration, swallowing-up all others, is *what He means;* and the more accurately we can apprehend the thought couched in the expression, the better. If a pardon is brought to a criminal under sentence, and particularly if it is made contingent on certain proceedings on his part, he does not occupy himself much with the rhythm of the sentences in which it is expressed, but is eager that he may not miss the meaning of a single instruction, since his life is in it. I solemnly assure my readers that, in no single case, have I made such alteration wantonly, or even slightly: never, without a strong persuasion that the Mind of the Spirit would be better discerned by the change. In some cases I have given the reasons at length; but I beg that every example may be compared with the original, and carefully weighed.

In general, I may say, the text has governed the sense adopted; not the sense the text: though I have been glad to look at certain doubtful or obscure phrases in the light of collateral passages. Nor would I be thought to treat with disrespect the great and good men of

whose labours the Church of God has so long availed. The translators were indubitably faithful men, and of eminent learning: yet to perceive and to convey the deep meaning of the thoughts of God, more than this is required. Whether they had thoroughly entered into the heavenly calling of the Church, the power of Christ's resurrection, and the believer's identification with Him in risen Life, and truths cognate with, and resultant from, this, may perhaps be doubted. It is more than doubtful, too, whether there are not now many very earnest and estimable Christians, who do not discern between the Spirit of Moses and the Spirit of Christ; who have not apprehended the deep truths taught by Jesus at the Well of Sychar,—that Worship now is that of accepted *Sons*, drawing nigh to the *Father* within the *Holiest;* who are vainly and uselessly labouring to put the new wine into old bottles.

Though the following Expositions cannot be considered as properly consecutive, yet there is a sort of chain which runs through the whole, beginning with the Purpose of God in past Eternity, and proceeding to the things promised by Him, in Eternity to come. The intermediate portions are occupied with the creation, apostasy, and penal death of man, the plan and execution

of Redemption; the voluntary humiliation, substitution and suffering of the Son of God; his Resurrection, and its results; his headship over all Creation; his purgation of his Bride; his priestly presentation of her; and his reception of her to the Eternal Glory.

And thus I commend these humble pages to all those who have been called into the fellowship of Jesus Christ our Lord; earnestly praying that they may be refreshed and edified thereby, and that the Son may be glorified in the sight of the Father.

TORQUAY,
November, 1884.

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I.

THE ETERNAL PURPOSE OF GOD.

THOUGH some of the attributes of God may be inferred from "the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead" (Rom. i. 20); yet his thoughts and purposes can never be so discovered. The ancient challenge remains unanswered, "Canst thou by searching find out God?" (Job xi. 7.) Yet even "the deep things of God He hath revealed to us, by his Spirit" (1 Cor. ii. 10).

Led by the Holy Ghost, then, with anointed eyes we open the written Word; every page of which comes to us as the utterance of God that cannot lie (Tit. i. 2). Its grand subject is the Son; the Centre of all the Father's counsels, the object of his infinite complacency. The Bible is all about Him; and so the inspired Apostle says, "Let the word of the Christ dwell richly in you" (Col. iii. 16);—not the utterances of the Blessed Lord, merely, but the Word which is, emphatically, about Him.

But the careless carnal reader will find little of Him, whom the Father delighteth to honour, even in the pregnant Word. Often the Spirit's

thoughts are beneath the surface: He opens his mouth in a parable: He uses similitudes (Psa. lxxviii. 2; Hos. xii. 10). We must dig for them as for hid treasures (Job iii. 21; Prov. ii. 4).

The New Testament is the key with which the Spirit unlocks the Old. There is not a citation of the ancient Word by the Lord or his Apostles, not an allusion,—but is eagerly hailed by "every scribe instructed unto the Kingdom of heaven" (Matt. xiii. 52). As, when a scient shows a well-filled cabinet to an intelligent child, the expectant eyes ardently watch the unlocking of drawer after drawer, not knowing what of beautiful, or curious, or rare will be displayed, so it should be with us. By the use of this wonder-working key the very first page of the Book becomes luminous; we are taught that Adam "is a type (*τύπος*) of Him that was to come" (Rom. v. 14).

When the Almighty and Allwise God had made this world, and filled it with creatures,—not by evolution, as the lying science of the day teaches, but by his creating word,—all was good in detail, and very good in aggregate. And everything was put in subjection under Man, who was made in God's image and likeness; that is, he bore God's impress of dominion; he represented God in rule: as regarded the earth, he was Head over all.

Was anything lacking to his complete satisfaction? Yes: he was *alone*. And his beneficent Creator saw that this was "*not good*" for

him; and determined to give him a companion. But first the subject animals are arrayed before him; their powers and capabilities are marked, compared, weighed; each being distinguished by a descriptive name. The Ape with its sub-human form, and semi-erect attitude; the Elephant with its sagacity combined with strength; the Horse with its docility and power; the Dog with its multiform wisdom and love; the Dove with its meekness and constancy; and hundreds more, of attributes of varying excellence, all passed before him; "but for Adam there was not found a help [companion] meet [suitable] for him" (Gen. ii. 20).

Here then was a distinct and real defect in the condition of him who was placed in such honour, as Head over all. And a defect that had not been the result of any moral failure, but was inherent in, and inseparable from, his dignity as Monarch. Like God whom he represented, he could have no equal in his dominion. To supply this lack there must be a new creation.

God sets Himself to supply the lack. He forms a *new* creature,—a Woman (Ibid. 21-24). In a very full and important sense, *new;* yet not properly *created,* but made out of already existing substance,—"taken out of the Man." Thus "*builded* He a Woman"; and she was now "bone of his bone, and flesh of his flesh"; actually one with him in substance and nature, while yet a distinct and separate being; his co-

partner and fellow-heir, while subordinate to him in position, posterior to him in time, and created expressly *for him*. For "the man was not created for [on account of] the woman, but the woman for the man" (1 Cor. xi. 9).

Most sweet and precious as is this tender sympathy in the heart of God towards man, considered only in its patent earthly aspect; and inestimably valuable as is the ordinance of holy matrimony, for his present happiness; the Holy Ghost shows us that this aspect is but the outside of the drawer; which, when He unlocks it, is found to be the casket of a Gem, whose value no powers of imagination, that we at present possess, suffice to grasp. "Marriage," said a venerated servant of Christ,[1] once, in my hearing, "is the very best type of the very best thing, that God ever did, or ever will do!"—And, strong as the assertion is, I do not think it a whit *too* strong.

It is in the Epistle to the Ephesians that this casket is unlocked. Citing this passage in Genesis ii., for its obvious practical bearing, on the relative duties of husbands and wives, which He enforces by the analogy between the husband and Christ on the one hand, and between the wife and the Church on the other, the Holy Ghost at length repeats the very words with which the Mosaic Narrative ends. "He that loveth his wife loveth himself. For no man ever

[1] Robert C. Chapman of Barnstaple.

yet hated his own flesh; but nourisheth and cherisheth it, even as the Lord the Church :—for we are members of his body, [made] out of (ἐκ) his flesh, and out of (ἐκ) his bones. 'For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall be joined unto his wife, and they two shall be one flesh.' This is a great Mystery; but I speak concerning Christ and the Church" (Eph. v. 22–32).

In the same Epistle (i. 15—ii. 7) we are favoured with yet further instruction about this wondrous union. The Apostle desires that the Ephesian believers may know the grandeur of that calling which as yet is possessed only in reversion; only in hope, though assured and pledged by the indwelling of the Spirit; and the riches of the glory [perhaps, the glorious richness] of his inheritance in the saints. Not, observe, our inheritance in God; but God's inheritance in us; a very wonderful phrase, and one that defies explanation. Well, how are the Apostle's readers to acquire this so desired knowledge? What is the measure of the exceeding [the hyperbolic] greatness of his power toward us believers? We have but to look at the Christ, and at the "energy of the power of that Divine Almightiness which raised *Him* from the dead, and set Him at his own right hand in the super-heavenlies, far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in the present age

but also in the coming age, and put all things under his feet. And Him, Head over all, He gave to the Church, which is his body, the filling-up of Him that filleth all things in all [times]. And you."

In this passage of wondrous depth, and breadth, and height, there are several points that demand our reverent attention.

1. The manner and measure in which God has dealt with Christ, we are to apply to his dealing with us. The words, "And you," with which the second chapter begins, are governed grammatically by no apparent verb, and the Authorized version has supplied one from the following sentence, at ver. 5. This the Revised version has not amended. But surely the whole connection of thought requires that the words are governed by the verbs "raised" and "set" in the preceding sentence; nay, that they are a constituent part of the sentence; without which all the grand utterance would have no force. What is asserted of the Christ is asserted of the Church: God raised *Him* and set *Him* in the super-heavenlies, and *you* too. And this co-partnership is again expressed in ch. ii. 5, 6,—in life out of death, in resurrection, in session in the super-heavenlies.

2. Whereas, in the type, we saw the new-made Eve given to Adam, we have here the converse of this; Christ given to the Church; for, in both cases, the gift was mutual. And it is in the

greatness of his dignity as Head over all, that He is thus given.[1]

3. Notice, again, the phrase, of not infrequent occurrence;—"the Church . . is his body": [2] where the relation of the natural body to the head is doubtless suggested. While v. 30 may perhaps glance at the circumstance that, in the type, the material, of which the Woman was fashioned, was taken, not from the head, but from the trunk of the Man:—"one of his ribs."

4. Here, too, we meet with the thought of "filling up":—a very sweet and blessed thought in the type, as we have seen: for there was a very distinct blank in the Man's estate,—a heart-blank, which only the Bride could fill. But surely a very wonderful thought in regard to the Antitype; so wondrously strange that it would have seemed unseemly even to think it, if God had not given it. But here it is: the word πλήρωμα strictly means a complement, that which fills up a blank. And thus, in the light of the type, and the Spirit's handling of it, we may reverently affirm that, even of the God-Man, in all his risen dignity and glory, the joy destined

[1] That the connection of the words is "gave to the Church" seems to me self-evident; "Head over all things" being parenthetic. "To be the head over all things to the Church," as generally read, appears little better than nonsense. Besides that the verb "gave" would have no remoter object.

[2] See Eph. v. 30; 1 Cor. xii. 12–27; Col. i. 18; etc.

for Him by the Father will not be complete, till his Bride, the Church, is seated by his side.

5. For the condition of being, contemplated, is that of Resurrection. It will save many mistakes to remember that an antitype is always on a higher level than the type. The condition of Adam, though one of absolute enjoyment, painless, and sinless, was mortal (in that it was *capable* of death, though not *subject* to death); and fallible, though not fallen. But the condition of "the Second Man" (1 Cor. xv. 45, 47) is that of resurrection, having passed through and overcome death, leaving it behind his back, and having put on immortality; with a body animated, not by a soul (ψυχὴ), but by a spirit (πνεῦμα); incorruptible, glorious, powerful (Ib. 42, 43).

6. The sphere of being is the very highest. The Holy Ghost uses a word (again and again in this Epistle) which is inadequately rendered by the word "heavenly." Ἐπουράνιος is literally superheavenly; that which is above the heavens; where (Psa. viii. 1) Jehovah is said to have set his glory. Our great High-priest (Heb. iv. 14) has "passed *through* (διεληλυθότα) the heavens"; and has "become (Ib. vii. 26) higher than the heavens." This is eminently worthy of observation; for *we* are made to sit together, "have been co-seated," in these very superheavenlies, in Him (Eph. ii. 6); while the place of his session is no less than the Throne of God!

True, this wondrous type, and the glorious

inferences legitimately deducible from it, belong rather to the corporate unity of the entire Church, than to individual believers. But the aggregate is composed of individuals; and what is true of the whole can hardly be denied to its parts. There are not wanting, however, divine oracles, which bear upon the condition of individual saints. Thus, in the great key-passage quoted (Eph. v. 30), the Apostle speaks distributively, "*We* are *members* . . ": and the same authority (Rom. vii. 4) says to his *brethren*, " . . that *ye* should be married to . . Him that is raised from the dead." We know, from abundant declarations, that overcoming believers shall share in the elevation of their Lord. He Himself says, "Where I am there shall also my servant be" (John xii. 26). "I will come again, and receive you unto Myself; that where I am, there ye may be also" (xiv. 3). And, in his intercessory prayer, "Father, I will that they also, whom Thou hast given Me, be with Me where I am" (xvii. 24). Yet once more, in his last message from the Majesty in the heavens, "To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with Me in my Throne, even as I also overcame, and have sat down with my Father in his Throne" (Rev. iii. 21).

Such a destiny, for us vile worthless sinners, is not only beyond the utmost grasp of our imagining, but almost beyond the power of believing. We feel as if we dared not, on any

evidence, entertain such anticipations. We are ready to say, they are impossible!

But pause a moment! How utterly impossible, nay, inconceivable, would it have seemed, that the Almighty, Everlasting God should, without any abrogation of, or change in, his Godhead, become an embryo shut up in a woman's womb; a babe cradled in her arms; a growing boy; a man poor, sorrowful, agonizing, dying, dead! Yet all this is an eternal verity.

Where is that Man now? He "sits at the right hand of God the Father, angels and authorities and powers subject unto Him" (1 Pet. iii. 22). He,—the Man,—is "glorified in the presence of the Father, with the glory which He [as God] had with the Father before the world was" (John xvii. 5). The same thing is affirmed by the Holy Ghost (Heb. i. 2, 3) of Him, "when He had purged our sins"; therefore certainly of Him incarnate; of the Man Christ Jesus. What is it that is affirmed? That He has "been *made*," or has *become* (implying a change of condition) superior to the Angels. Do we ask, How much superior? Mark the import of the words, "so much . . as,"—a distinct measure or standard of comparison. He has become so much superior to the Angels, as He inherited a Name more exalted than theirs. This inherited Name is surely the ineffable incommunicable Name of God Most High, which He inherited from eternity. There is no suggestion of his having *obtained* it,

in the original phrase. It is his, by eternal generation; "the only begotten God, μονογενὴς Θεὸς," (John i. 18, Cod. B.). This superiority, then, is the standard. How far above the highest Angel was his original Divinity? To that same height has He carried his Manhood. In other words, the Godhead of the Son has suffered no deterioration, no diminution of glory: there has been no "conversion of the Godhead into flesh," but "a taking of the Manhood into God."[1]

This phrase,—not mine, be it carefully marked, but of the ancient Church's most elaborate Confession,—of the "taking of the Manhood into God," seems to soar to a more awful height than we have yet contemplated. But we may not reject it on this account; at least till we have duly weighed what our adored High-priest says in John xvii. 21;—"I pray . . for them which shall believe . . that they all may be one; as Thou, Father, art in Me, and I in Thee, that they also may be One in Us." Note the words; not *in Me;* but IN US:—i.e., in the Father, as well as in the Son; and *that* not otherwise than *as* the Father is in the Son, and the Son in the Father. And the Spirit confirms this aspect of the mystic

[1] The reply of the Lord Jesus to the catch-question of the Sadducees (Matt. xxii. 30; Luke xx. 34–36) may be thought to set the Resurrection-state of believers, equal to that of the angels, but *no higher.* But the word ἰσάγγελοι, angel-like, may mean like them in regard of the one point in question,—individual asexuality; *and no more.*

union, addressing the Thessalonian saints (in both Epistles), as the Church "in God the Father, and in the Lord Jesus Christ."

Peter (2 Pet. i. 4) speaks of our "becoming partakers—[partners in common, κοινωνοὶ]—of a Divine (Θείας) nature." Paul (1 Cor. xiii. 12) anticipates a future knowing, even as he is now thoroughly known. It is hard to conjecture what he can refer to, if not God's own perfect knowledge. And John (1 John iii. 2) declares "what we shall be" to be as yet unrevealed; even while we know assuredly that "we are now sons of God"; and that we shall be like the Christ, when we see Him, not as He had been seen here, in humiliation, but "as He is."

Here then I close. I have not attempted,—I dare not attempt—to explain these unmanifested wonders, but only to show them. I essay no more than to gather, as with a prism, the scattered rays that emanate from the Source of Light, in "the Scripture that cannot be broken," and to concentrate them on "the Purpose of Him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will," to "head-up all things in Christ, . . in whom also we have inherited."

II.

REDEMPTION.

If it be permitted to speak of the things of the Eternal God, "with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning" (James i. 17), no before or after, but one everduring now,—after the manner of men, as He condescends sometimes to speak to us of Himself,—we may venture reverently to suggest that Redemption was no part of his original Purpose. That the mighty Angels had early cognizance of the wondrous scheme which we have just considered, viz. the Union of (the as yet uncreated) Man with God; and that they had joyful sympathy with its *goodness*;—is intimated in Jehovah's appeal to Job out of the whirlwind (Job xxxviii. 4–7); "Where wast thou when I laid the foundations of the earth? . . when the Morning-stars sang together, and all the Sons of God shouted for joy?" But another Divine attribute is manifested to those august beings, in the Mystery of Redemption; which is being unfolded (Eph. iii. 10), "to the intent that, NOW, unto the principalities and the powers in the super-heavenlies,

might be made known, through the church, the manifold [of many aspects, πολυποίκιλος] wisdom of God."

Let us search, humbly but diligently, in order that we may discover wherein lies the mysterious *wisdom* (unsearchable, until revealed,) of this scheme of Redemption; as distinguished from the *goodness* of the scheme of Incarnation,[1] which must have been patent from the first.

The sacred narrative of the tender solicitude of Jehovah God to fill-up the loneliness of Man, by a companion "made out of his flesh and out of his bones,"—occupies the second chapter of Genesis; whereas Sin comes not in, till the third. And though this may seem a trivial fact, it is not too trivial to be beneath the Holy Ghost's noticing, or his ordering (See Gal. iii. 16);—and therefore not unworthy of our attention. It seems to suggest that the Marriage-union of Christ and the Church had been planned, in the mind of the Father, irrespective of, and anterior to, Sin.

Perhaps it is not too bold a conjecture, to presume that it was the publication of the primeval Purpose in the super-heavenlies, that

[1] I use this distinctive term, with some misgiving; being not quite sure that the mystic Union might not have been accomplished (apart from sin) without Incarnation, by an assumption of Manhood into God without God being manifest in flesh; though I cannot conceive how.

awakened Sin in the first sinner. It is probable that Satan was the very first and highest of the angelic Princes, the chief of all created beings: and the proposal to create a new being, with a destiny incomparably loftier than his own, may have aroused in his heart a jealousy, which presently ripened into a determination to destroy and devour the favoured creature, "as soon as it should be born." Thus our Lord's word (John viii. 44) would have an intense and definite meaning; "He was a murderer [a *man*slayer, *ἀνθρωποκτόνος*] from the beginning (i.e. of his present course):"—and thus we discern also the ground of those two epithets by which (Psa. viii. 2) the Holy Ghost designates him,—"the Enemy and Avenger."

What consternation must have run through the heavenly hosts, when, at the instigation of the subtle Serpent, "the woman took of the forbidden fruit, and did eat, and gave also unto her husband with her, and he did eat"! And this, not so much on account of the injury to Man, as on account of the apparent triumph over God. As it seemed, the Enemy had suddenly gotten such a victory over the All-wise and Almighty, as could not conceivably be remedied. That the Omnipotence, which had created him, could annihilate him with a word, they doubtless knew:—but this would be no remedy. The marvellous subtlety of the Devil lay in this; that the disloyalty and defection of

Man put into the Enemy's hand a weapon of vast power against God.

Satan may be considered as now saying—"Thou hast pledged Thyself to bless this new-made Creature. I dare Thee to perform thy Purpose! Thou hast announced to us thy pleasure to assume Manhood into perpetual living union with thy own Godhead. Do it now, if Thou dare! Thou canst not compass these creatures' honour and happiness now, without belying Thyself. They have sinned; and Thou hast already sentenced them to eternal death. If Thou perform not thy word, what becomes of thy truth? If Thou do perform it, what becomes of thy purpose?"

Probably, among all the shining ranks of Angels, there was not one who knew how to solve this problem; not one, who could even conjecture how God would be able to silence this arrogant challenge:—yet silenced it must be, or Righteousness is dethroned in heaven. How is it possible for God to be just, and yet the justifier of the ungodly (Rom. iii. 26; iv. 5)?

Perhaps their faith was permitted to be tried by the unsolved dilemma. Perhaps they learned its solution only from the revelations gradually made from God to Man:—by his ordinance of Blood-sacrifice; by his word, oral and written; by his under-teaching in typical persons and things. And this only by slow development; for, in the Apostles' days (1 Pet. i. 12), these

august powers, these spiritual intelligences, were still "intently bending down to investigate (ἐπιθυμοῦσιν, pres. tense) the sufferings of Christ and the glories that would follow them." And that they had still much to learn, the word already cited from Eph. iii. 10 shows. We must not think that, because of their vast superiority to us in nature, their acquaintance with the things of God, or even their capacity to apprehend them when revealed, is superior, or even equal, to that of us who are believers. For we have received (1 Cor. ii. 10–16) the Spirit of God; we have the Mind of Christ; and this expressly "that we may know the things graciously given to us by God"; "discerning spiritual [things] by spiritual [faculties]." Spiritual knowledge, and spiritual capacity, must be far higher than angelic.

The dilemma, then, was real, inscrutable, terrible. Yet only to created intelligences; not to the All-wise God Himself. We may not think of Him as daunted, surprised, caught in a snare. Everything was foreseen in his infinite Mind; every possibility met; every contingency provided for. He is Jehovah-Jireh from eternity. "In the mount,"—at the emergency,—"Jehovah will see to it" (Gen. xxii. 14).

The Lamb was "slain from the foundation of the world" (Rev. xiii. 8). That is, we may reverently but confidently say, by the Eternal Word's acceptance of the proposal of the Eternal

Father, that "He who knew no sin should be made sin for us" (2 Cor. v. 21). This is the marvellous way in which Atonement should be made; in which the alienated creature should be brought to be again *at one* with his Creator; that man should be reconciled to God, and that by God Himself. That, too, without the slightest abatement of God's perfect righteousness; the full penalty of death being exacted (Isa. liii. 7: *Lowth*) from the sinner; and borne by him; and yet the sinner come out of the penalty guiltless, living, immortal! Yes, in a Substitute, able to endure to the uttermost; yet having life in Himself (John v. 26); and willing; so that, in spite of cavilling gainsayers, there was no unrighteousness in the substitution; for even a heathen could see that "volenti non fit injuria." O miracle of wisdom! O miracle of grace! That God Himself, the offended, insulted, robbed Sovereign (Psa. lxix. 4), should voluntarily become the Substitute, the Surety, the Sin-bearer!

It has pleased the Holy Ghost to draw aside the curtain, so to speak, of this ancient Covenant, putting us into the position of auditors of the conference between the Father and the Son. He has done this, first in Psalm xl. 5–8; and then He has given us, in Heb. x. 5–10, his own infallible comment on what He had recorded. Let us listen with deepest attention to what we hear.

The proposal of God the Father is not cited in words. But we have no difficulty in apprehend-

ing it, both from the Son's reply, and from the Spirit's comment. The Son replies, "I come to do thy will": the Spirit adds, "By which will we are sanctified."

The divine proposal then was,—to sanctify, or consecrate to Himself, or make fit for his own use, *us;* who were guilty, condemned, dead. And, further, to do this, "by the offering of the body of Jesus Christ, *once*." To this proposal the eternal Son heartily accedes. Declaring that all the sacrifices and offerings of earlier dispensations could not effect this object, being only shadows; and that, so, God could find no ultimate satisfaction in them,—He says, "Lo! I come to do [to perform thoroughly, to exhaust] thy will, O God!" And, to show his absolute and unreserved subjection of Himself to his Father's pleasure, as a Servant (John iv. 34; v. 30; vi. 38–40; Luke xxii. 42; etc.), He interjected the remarkable words, "Mine ears hast Thou digged";—in allusion to an ordinance (Exod. xxi. 6), in due time to be promulgated, concerning the willing bondslave.[1]

Here is manifested the *grace* of God. Not merely goodness: *that* had been developed be-

[1] Yet it is remarkable that the Greek version of the Seventy has rendered this clause by "a body hast Thou prepared Me." And the Holy Ghost, as if allowing that this rendering conveys the divine thought, has, in Heb. x. 5, adopted it. The preparation of a human body in which to suffer, was a fastening of Him, as Servant, to the door.

fore, in the Purpose of the final union of the creature with the Creator. The Incarnation of the Son of God was infinite goodness; but his Incarnation, *in order to die*, was infinite grace; a far, far deeper and higher attribute!

There seems no ground for supposing that this solution of the great Problem was at once made known to Satan and his confederate Demons; nor even to the elect Angels; but remained a secret in the hearts of the Father and the Son; a "mystery hid from the ages and from the generations" (Col. i. 26);—"hid in God" (Eph. iii. 9). Perhaps the very first publication of it was couched in that pregnant word denounced to the Serpent himself (Gen. iii. 15);—"It [the Woman's Seed] shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel."

And then, straightway, even before the guilty, but greatly graced progenitors of the Seed were driven out of the Paradise, the first august shadow-type was vouchsafed (Gen. iii. 21); a luminous shadow; wherein the punitive death of an innocent Substitute was ordained and accepted instead of *their* death; and his spotless robe of righteousness was divinely put upon them. For Jehovah God chose a lamb out of the flocks, and slew it; and then, of its skin, did He, with his own hands, make clothing for them, and covered with it their nakedness.

The sufficiency of the Ransom paid is beyond our capacity of estimating. The robbery of

God's right to have glory from his creatures, and so the wrong done to Him,—in the single disobedience of Adam, we have no means of estimating. But this is augmented by the innumerable repetitions of personal offence in Adam's descendants. "But where sin swarmed (ἐπλεόνασεν), Grace did much more overspread (ὑπερεπερίσσευσεν; Rom. v. 20). The cumulate offence, though vast, is not infinite. But the Restorer of that He took not away, is the Infinite God, though found in fashion as a Man. As a single gold coin outvalues a bag of farthings, so does his Divine dignity enhance incomparably the value of his sufferings as Man. What was the weight of the Wrath which pressed Him into the "deep waters where the floods overflowed Him,"—into "the deep mire where there was no standing" (Psa. lxix. 2); what He endured when "the pit yawned to shut her mouth upon Him" (Ibid. 15);—when "God Himself had forsaken Him" (Psa. xxii. 1);—blessed be his Name, we know not; we may never know. It is enough that the penalty was exhausted; the ransom was sufficient: for God raised Him from the dead. The Spirit's argument in Rom. iv. 23–25, is quite conclusive. Faith is "imputed to us for righteousness, if we believe on Him that raised up Jesus . . who was delivered *for* our offences, and was raised again *for* our justification."[1]

[1] The word rendered "for" is διὰ with acc.; which

To created intelligence, angelic or human, it must have remained contingent, even to the very last, whether the Christ would be able thus to satisfy the Divine demands, and yet have life to spare ;—abundant life (John x. 10), for the fulfilment of the Eternal Purpose. The journey to Emmaus (Lu. xxiv.) witnesses how bitterly the tomb had blasted the hopes of even those who had seen and owned the proofs that He was the Christ of God. But Resurrection answered all.

The results of the Atonement are vast and various; its relations to the Glory of God are manifold: some of these may come under research subsequently. The present essay is limited to one,—the removal of what appeared a fatal barrier to the accomplishment of the Eternal

always implies the procuring cause of what follows. Thus, as our offences preceded, and were the cause of, the delivering of Him to death, so our justification preceded, and was the cause of, the raising up of Him.

The statement so common in hymns, and in the slipshod theology of the day,—that Christ, as a mighty Conqueror, burst the barriers of the grave,—has no Scriptural warrant. It is affirmed, and reiterated with marked emphasis, that "God raised Him from the dead." How, indeed, could it be otherwise? If a malefactor, enduring a sentence of six months' imprisonment, should, on the first night, because he has great strength, burst his prison-door off its hinges, and walk forth,—would this satisfy the majesty of law? Would he not be taken again, and again imprisoned? But, if the authority of the law unlock the door, and set him free, it is a token that his penalty is exhausted.

Purpose of God. The contemplation of it may be assisted by a homely illustration.

A young Priest of the family of Aaron loves a maiden of Israel, who is betrothed to him. The announced marriage evokes great joy among the friends. Suddenly she is smitten with leprosy, and banished the Camp,—an object of loathing. The Priest himself is obliged to pronounce her unclean. His love and his hope are blighted. That union which had been designed for him by his loving father, and which he had cherished in his own heart, is now impossible, unless the plague can be healed.

This is a faint shadow of what I have sought to treat;—the Removal of the Leprosy from the Betrothed Bride. No wonder that Atonement is the grand controlling subject of the Bible. Because this is the absorbing question at present. Until this is settled, the Eternal Purpose must be in abeyance.

I have intentionally abstained from touching the moral aspects of Sin; its heinousness; its baseness; its hatefulness; its ingratitude; the collateral evils it has wrought; the ruin of Creation; the inconceivable horrors of eternity spent in the lake of fire, that had been prepared for the Devil and his angels.

O what a thrill of deep delight
Through the bright hosts of glory ran,
When Jesus, in the fearful fight,
Had finish'd all for ransom'd man!

"'Tis finish'd! finish'd!" sweetly rang
Through the whole world of bliss above:
And seraphim brake forth, and sang
The glories of redeeming love.

Thus heaven rejoic'd; while yet below,
Jesus, thy saints, in deep dismay,
Beheld the scene of mighty woe,
Till faith, and all but love, gave way.

Yes; it was love alone that led
Thy brethren, Lord, to seek thy grave:
But every gleam of hope had fled,
For Thou, they deem'd, hadst fail'd to save.

But 'twas thy Father's power that broke,
Lord, ere they came, the grave's control:
'Twas thine own blessed voice that spoke
"Peace! Peace!" to each reviving soul!

Peace was their portion; peace is ours:
We, like thine earlier brethren, see
Our victory won o'er Satan's powers,—
Our blessedness secur'd by Thee.

In the pure blood on Calv'ry shed,
Wash'd from our sin, beloved Lord!
We, with Thyself, our living Head,
Wait for our glorious, bright reward.

Sir E. Denny.

III.

GOD'S BECOMINGNESS.

The Apostle, in a very grand doxology (Eph. iii. 20), speaks of God as "able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that energizeth in us"; which, he had already said (i. 20), is the same as had energized in the Christ. These words are a comforting assurance and stay, under such gleams of supernal light as lately dazzled us from Him, "whose Life is the Light of men." We heard Him ask, "As Thou, Father, art in Me, and I in Thee, that they also may be one in US" (John xvii. 21). Words of marvellous import, indeed! Such a oneness as they imply daunts us in attempting to conceive it. Not only does it seem so vast, that we *cannot* think it, but so arrogant that we *must not*, if we could. But here the Holy Ghost encourages our loftiest, our most daring thoughts, by pointing out God's ability to do, not only above, but "exceeding abundantly above," our very utmost power to think.

Unfamiliar, alas! such thoughts are even to real Christians. The tendency to "let slip away the things which we have heard, like leaky

vessels," for lack of "earnest heed,"—is not less common among English believers of the nineteenth century, than it was among Hebrews of the first. To very many, such thoughts are "speculative":—they like what is "practical." Themes on which the Holy Ghost delights to linger, unfolding the manifold glories of Christ; the deep thoughts of the Father concerning the Son whom He would reveal to us;—fall too often on deaf ears, and on cold, unsympathizing hearts. They want something "more practical"!

Great numbers of Christians are not sure whether they are saved or not: they know nothing of separation from the world; they do not truly aim at it: they are constantly sinning and repenting: if they read the Scriptures, it is as a kind of pious duty, a sort of compensation for known earthliness; or a seeking to find personal comfort; or a device for pumping-up in their souls devotional aspirations. Self is too constantly the centre toward which all their thoughts radiate.

We may picture a believer, really devout, but trained in this self-centring religion, coming to the Eighth Psalm, in a course of private reading. Verse 1 suggests the "Lord's prayer"; he lifts his heart to "our Father which art in heaven," and he perhaps pursues it to the end, thankful for such a happy thought. Ver. 2; "babes and sucklings." Perhaps he is a father; he reflects on the number of little ones lately

converted; and says, "Lord, grant that my dear babes may be early brought to Jesus!" Then "enemies"! He thanks God that he has no enemies that he is aware of. "A little lower"! "I am unutterably lower than those grand and holy angels: yet God has looked upon me!" "Crowned." "O that I might aspire to a crown when I die!" "Sheep and oxen." He cannot get much out of these; but perhaps he is thankful for the usefulness to man of God's creatures. And then he slowly closes the Book, with a painful (if unconfessed) feeling of disappointment, that so large a part of the Bible is barren of comfort to the soul.

Such persons have never been taught to see Christ as the great Subject of the Psalms; nay, of the whole Scripture. Perhaps, if they had, the result would be scarcely different;—so little do his interests occupy them, apart from their own individual security against the wrath to come.

Read in New Testament light, however, this short Psalm becomes a glorious revelation of the Purpose of God centring in Man. The Seer abruptly bursts into a lofty note of praise to God in a twofold character. "O Jehovah!" everlasting I AM: the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever! "Our Adonai!" Sovereign Controller, Disposer of all things, of supreme power and authority. "How excellent is thy Name in all the Earth!" The earthly glory of God is celebrated first. The time is hastening when

his will shall be done *on earth.* "Israel shall blossom, and bud, and fill the face of the world with fruit" (Isa. xxvii. 6). This is the proper sphere of Old Testament prediction. The Prophets are full of glorious promises of earthly bliss, under the rule of King Jesus, when "He shall be a Priest upon his throne" (Zech. vi. 13). To cite passages adequately would require a volume: Isaiah (xxxv; lx; lxv): Jeremiah (xxx; xxxi): Ezekiel (xxxvii; xxxix): Joel (iii): Amos (ix): *et al.:* all describe the more than primeval, more than paradisaic beauty and fertility and peace of this Earth, when iniquity shall be purged out of it. And it shall be absolutely without end. Common notions,—that this world is to be annihilated after the Millennium,—are quite unscriptural. The prophets just cited are unanimous on this point. Jerusalem is to be "an *eternal* excellency"; Jehovah will be to her "an *everlasting* Light." Israel shall not "cease being a nation *for ever*"; Jehovah's "sanctuary in the midst of them *for evermore.*" They shall "*no more* be pulled up out of their land; but Judah shall dwell *for ever.*" Surely these predictions warrant the apostrophe with which the Seer begins and finishes his grand Song:—"How excellent is thy Name in all the Earth!"

But the God of glory has another sphere than this for the display of his highest perfections. The sacred Seer proceeds to say,—"who hast set thy glory above the heavens." We are thus

introduced to those super-heavenly spheres, those ἐπουράνια of the Epistles to the Ephesians and the Hebrews,—whither our raised Lord Jesus, our Great Priest, has gone, having "passed *through* the heavens." Here we must look for the Magnificence of Jehovah. The Hebrew word הוֹד (*hōd*) is variously rendered in English by *glory, majesty, honour, beauty, comeliness.* But the venerable Septuagint version, which the Holy Ghost has honoured by mainly using it in N. T. quotations,—has rendered this word, into Greek, by a very remarkable sonorous compound, —μεγαλοπρέπεια,—literally, *great-becomingness;* suggesting a wonderful expanse of meaning. And though the passage does not come into citation in Heb. ii., yet the thought contained is distinctly recognised and approved by the inspired Apostle in *ver.* 10; in the word ἔπρεπε, signifying *it did become;* it was becoming to God; it was eminently worthy of Him.

Something, then, which the supreme and everlasting God considers pre-eminently becoming, is to occur in the superheavenlies! What is it? It is the exaltation of Man to that sphere; and the subjecting of all creation to him. What man? Is it Adam, as he was created in the dominion-image of God? No: the word used is אֱנוֹשׁ, *enōsh,* which definitely means *incurably frail, feeble, worthless, fallen, mortal man;* and moreover, it is added, "or a son of Adam"; and so, certainly not Adam himself. But, lifting his

gaze to that glittering array of starry worlds which throngs illimitable space,—the Seer contrasts with their grandeur, poor, lowly, suffering Man. He is made lower than the angels; yet only for a very little while; and "*made*," too; as if not originally lower: and, while he looks, he sees this very Man crowned with glory and honour, and set in a dominion which has all things under its feet!

But it is hinted that some formidable obstacle lies in the way. Certain enemies of God oppose this manifestation of his Exceeding Becomingness. And, in particular, there is one Arch Enemy and Self-Avenger, who erects himself in antagonism to the Purpose of God; and that with such a prestige, and such a plausibility, and such a success, that, unless he can be silenced, and that legally, the Purpose cannot be accomplished. The character and status of this mighty Antagonist, and the nature and temper of the weapon which he so skilfully wielded,—we have to some extent discussed already. The salient point, here, is the apparent feebleness and inadequacy of the means, by which the keen weapon was plucked out of his hand, and turned against himself.

And now let us turn to another of the Scriptures of God,—the Epistle to the Hebrews. We are first introduced to the Eternal Son; God the Word; Heir of all things; Maker of the Worlds or Ages; the Outflashing of the Father's Glory

and Counterpart of his Essence; upholding all things by his word of power. Then we see Him effecting a purging of our sins; for which, as we know, the Word was made flesh. Thenceforth it is Immanuel, the mysterious God-man; who, seated on the right hand of the Majesty in the Highest, is seen as far superior to the Angels as before He stooped to take our flesh. The Son has "ascended up where He was before" (John vi. 62).

Presently the inspiring Spirit proceeds to expound this ancient Oracle, the viiith Psalm. His thesis is, that God hath subjected the future Inhabited Earth, not to Angelic but to Human dominion (ii. 5). For, quoting the Psalm, "Thou hast put all things under his feet,"—He lays emphasis on the word "all"; insisting that the subjection is to be absolute, and without exception. But He instantly admits the contradiction which all present experience furnishes to this:—"We see not yet all things put under man; but we do see, crowned with glory and honour, because of the suffering of death,—Jesus;—one who had been made for a very little while, lower than the angels, in order that (ὅπως),[1] by the grace of God, He might taste death for every one.[2]

Thus, definitely, the "Enōsh Son of Adam"

[1] See Winer (Gram. N. T. Greek), on ὅπως.

[2] Some contend that παντὸς is neuter here; and that the meaning is that Jesus died for everything; viz. in order that everything might be subjected to Him (See

of the Psalm is shewn to be Jesus; and on Him our gaze must be fixed. On Jesus; the humbled, emptied (Phil. ii. 7) Son of God; originally infinitely above the angels, but for a very little while made lower than they:—how much lower let the cross declare! And now we are taught how well all this order *became* the only-wise God; and what an intensity of meaning there was in the phrase,—"who hast set thy *Great-Becomingness* above the heavens." We are reminded of his eternal Purpose to bring to his own glory some of his creatures, in the relation of his *sons;* of his committing to his co-equal, co-eternal Son, the only begotten God, the Word,—the effecting of this purpose; and the cordial consent of the Son to do it; of the terrible bar in the way,—the Sin of the chosen *children;* of the success of the haughty Enemy, in wielding the weapon that he had forged. His weapon must be turned against himself: he must be stilled, put down, and that judicially, righteously, forensically, in open court,[1] where he stands pleading.

Bengel *in loco*). But it seems best to give to ὑπὲρ its ordinary sense of *instead of, on behalf of,* and to consider παντὸς masculine, referring to the *sons* of God, the objects of his electing *will* (See *ver.* 10; and x. 10).

[1] In Zech. iii. 1–5, and Jude 9, we are given to witness a sample of the pleading in court. Joshua represents the sinful sons; Satan presses the claim of the sin-cursing Law,—the body of *the* Moses (τοῦ Μωσέως; where the article seems to have this force; as in 1 Cor. x. 2):

We have already seen how marvellously this was effected; how Christ "put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself"; and how "the Path of Life," which was *first* shewn to Him (Psa. xvi. 11), and which He was *then* to shew to the many sons, led from the closed grave to the right hand of God. But now we are to see (if indeed, we are not dazzled by such a blaze of light) how becoming this was to the Father. The condemned, who were to be separated, were God's children by eternal calling: He who undertook to separate them was God's Son by eternal generation: they are, thus, of one [parentage]. So He is not ashamed to put them on the same level as Himself; saying, "I will declare thy Name unto my *brethren: in the midst* of the Church [as not above them, but on their level] will I sing praise unto Thee" (cf. Psa. xxii. 22, with John xx. 17, 19). Again, He takes the place of a truster,—a low human place; and He, Immanuel, accepts the gift of the children — God's children, and therefore *his* brethren—that Jehovah (Isa. viii. 18) has given him. These children, however, are found in flesh and blood; therefore the Word must take part in the same: since it behoved (or became) Him to be made in all things[1] like unto his brethren.

Jehovah-Messiah rebukes him, by pleading that the Fire has done its worst, and that Joshua is plucked out of it. Thus Immanuel silences the accuser of his brethren.

[1] It is often added, "sin only excepted";—but this is

Here comes in what excites the wondering admiration of the inspired Psalmist. "Out of the mouth of babes and sucklings hast Thou ordained strength, because of thine enemies." The word "*ordained*" is properly "*founded*,"—laid a foundation for;—and "*strength*" implies the Almightiness of God in its very grandest revelation. To babes and sucklings He looks for this: to man in extreme weakness. What can be weaker than one crucified (1 Cor. i. 27, 28; ii. 2)? He was "crucified through weakness" (2 Cor. xiii. 4); and his strength is made perfect in weakness (Ibid. xii. 9). Look at the despised and rejected Man of sorrows in Isa. liii. Look at Him in Psa. lxix.:—shame covering his face; reproach breaking his heart; the very song of drunkards. Nay, literally, the Eternal so emptied Himself, as to be a babe of a span long!

But the words are plural;—"babes and sucklings." He has associates. The babes indeed sang Hosanna to Him; and He cited in their defence this very utterance (Matt. xxi. 16). But is this all that it meant? Surely no: this was but another phase of the type. In Matt. xviii. 2–6, the little ones are his lowly meek disciples. Perhaps the Lord had in view this very Psalm, when He rejoiced in spirit, and uttered the words recorded in Luke x. 21. (See also 1 Pet. ii. 2.)

needless. Sin was no part of flesh and blood; but a terrible accident that had befallen it. And this He took putatively.

Christ and his Church, co-crucified (Rom. vi. 6; Gal. ii. 20) are the babes and sucklings, through whom God lays the foundation of his Strength.[1] "For it became Him, for whom are all things, and by whom are all things . . to make the Captain of their salvation perfect [*i.e.* to bring Him to Resurrection] through [death-] sufferings."

Who, then, are the partners of the glorified Son of God? Only those whom the Father gave to Him. The world is not redeemed: purchased it is; the Man for the Treasure hid in the field (Matt. xiii. 44), sold all that He had, and bought the field. So, in his Intercession (John xvii. 2), He says to the Father,—"Thou hast given Him authority over all flesh, that He might give eternal life to as many as Thou hast given Him. The world (ver. 9) is distinctly excluded from his advocacy:—"I pray for them: I pray not for the world, but for them whom Thou hast given Me." He has engaged to bring the Father's sons to glory; and He will keep his pledge (ver. 12): "Those that Thou gavest Me I have kept; and none of them is lost."

Thus God is glorified (John xvii. 4). Thus is

[1] The LXX., for the Heb. "*founded strength*," say "*perfected praise*." And the Lord Jesus, in Matt. xxi. 16, adopts their rendering. The verb καταρτίζω, to *perfect* means to re-set a limb that has been dislocated; and here seems to look at the restoring of that glory of God, of which He had been wronged.

He well-pleased for *his* righteousness' sake, who magnified the Law, and made it honourable (Isa. xlii. 21). Thus is his Truth vindicated; his holiness made illustrious. Thus his counsel shall stand, and He will do all his pleasure (Isa. xlvi. 10). And thus, when the Marriage of the Lamb has come, and his Bride, in fine linen clean and white, is united to Him amid the acclaiming ranks of ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands, of mighty and holy angels; and when the Church shall be displayed before all wondering eyes, "in God the Father, and in the Lord Jesus Christ," while the Enemy and Avenger, the Devil and all his angels, shut up in the burning lake, are set forth for an example, suffering the vengeance of eternal fire; then,—through the Ages of the Ages, will be known, what is the Exceeding Becomingness of God, set above the heavens.

IV.

BAPTISM (John).

What has the All-wise Spirit to teach us in the appearance and ministry of John, the son of Zacharias? That he occupies a place of high importance in the Divine economy, we cannot fail to see. A grand and imposing personage is John, in his isolation from the haunts of men, his contempt for the indulgences of this life, his severe righteousness, his denunciation of sin, his threatening of hell-fire, and, above all, in his introduction of the Son of God into his office of Redeemer.

Announced by the prophet Isaiah, seven centuries before his birth; and again by Malachi, three centuries later; and, on each occasion, sealed with signal tokens of a very special and peculiar mission; on the latter occasion identified with Elijah, the most awful, and, in some respects, the most singularly honoured, of all the ancient Prophets;—we cannot but see that John forms, if somewhat dim in outline, as he stands alone in the wilderness, a very august and important actor in the grand Epos of the ages and generations.

His advent into the world was remarkable. By both parents he was of the lineage of Aaron; and thus born to the priesthood, which yet we find no trace of his ever executing. He was the son of a barren wife, his parents both well-stricken in years;—that ancient symbol of Almighty Energy coming-in to human helplessness (Gen. xvii. 1, 17; xviii. 11–14; 1 Sam. ii. 1–10; Rom. iv. 19–21). His conception, birth, character, mission, and honour, were announced by one of the loftiest Angels of Jehovah (Luke i. 11–20); and sealed by miraculous signs. His name, signifying Jehovah's Gift, was prescribed. He was, not only inspired, but filled, with the Holy Ghost, even from his mother's womb. Both his father and his mother, before and at his birth, were also filled with the Holy Ghost, and brake forth into lofty strains of prophecy, of which this God-given child was one (if not the chief) theme. By and by, as he pursues his course of service and testimony, he becomes the observed of all. The Sanhedrim send a deputation of Priests and Levites (John i. 19) to ask him, "Who art thou?" "All men mused in their hearts, whether he were the Christ or not" (Lu. iii. 15): And the Blessed Son Himself (Matt. xi. 11) gave, with solemn asseveration, this witness to him; "Amen! I say unto you, Among them that are born of women, there hath not risen a greater than John the Baptist!"

Where, then, does John's surpassing greatness

lie? What did he accomplish, to warrant the grandeur of all these his august surroundings? Again and again had it been predicted that he should "prepare the way of Jehovah"; that he should "make God's highways, his paths, straight" (Isa. xl. 3; Lu. i. 76; iii. 3; Matt. iii. 3; John i. 23; Lu. vii. 27; etc.); that he should reconcile fathers to sons, and sons to fathers (Mal. iv. 6; Lu. i. 17).

We read these very precise and repeated predictions, which in due time John, with like precision and reiteration, appropriated to himself; and we ask, in some bewilderment,—What paths, or highways, of Jehovah did John deal with? How came they "crooked," and "rough"? And how did John "prepare" them, or "make them straight and plain"? In what sense were the fathers and sons at variance? and how did John reconcile them? In his very brief course, made briefer still by the tyrant's dungeon, this "Friend of the Bridegroom" (John iii. 29) seems to have had little opportunity, with all his loving joy, to facilitate the Bridegroom's triumph!

Perhaps there is hardly a chapter in the New Testament;—hardly a chapter in the whole Bible;—that is more slightly slurred-over, than the third of Matthew. Commentators, ministers, lecturers, readers,—come to it, read it, muse over it, and pass it by, with a remark or two of the most trivial and common-place character. Yet, often, there is the lurking persuasion that

more is meant than is discerned. What does John himself mean? What does his baptism mean? Why does Jesus submit to baptism? What "righteousness" is fulfilled by it? Why did such glorious manifestations instantly follow? And why is the whole transaction recorded by the inspiring Spirit, in so minute detail, *here*, at the very opening of the great Work of God manifest in flesh? For it is very suggestive that each of the four evangelists presents the preaching, the baptism, and the testimony of John, before he begins to touch the ministry of Christ Jesus.

Can any light on these points be gathered from the prophecies of Isaiah and Malachi? In the former, the passage occurs in the beginning of the fortieth chapter. It has been often observed, that a division, into two nearly equal portions, of the great Prophet's Divine utterances, occurs at this point, which may be not unaptly compared to that between the Old and New Testaments. The first Portion (to chap. xxxv.) deals, *mainly*, with God's earthly people Israel; with their terrible ingratitudes, rebellions, and apostacies from Jehovah; with the veil of blindness judicially sealed upon the nation; with gracious glimpses of a remnant that should survive all; with awful and almost universal judgments,—on the sinful nation, first, and then on their oppressors, all to merge into the most brilliant blessing, over and over again pictured, of which

the earth, under the reign of Immanuel, should be the perpetual scene.

Then is interjected an Episode of four chapters, —historical, yet highly typical,—of Hezekiah's oppression by the haughty Assyrian; his death-sickness; his recovery; and the miraculous annihilation of the Gentile power.

And then, from chap. xl. to the end, the prominent subjects are of a yet more exalted character; largely dealing with the substitutive sufferings of the Christ; with the blessings covenanted to follow; with Gospel promises; with the security and glory of the heavenly Church; with her gathering, and that mainly out of Gentiles, from the ends of the earth. The earlier Series had closed (xxxv. 4) with a threat and a promise, "Say to them that are of a fearful heart, Be strong; fear not: behold, your God will come with vengeance, even God with a recompence! He will come and save you!" And the latter Series opens in the same manner (xl. 1, 10):—"Comfort ye, comfort ye my people, saith your God. . . Behold, the Lord Jehovah will come with strong hand, and his arm shall rule for Him. Behold, his reward is with Him, and his work before Him!"

Here, then, are visions of grace, of consolation, of Divine favour! Here is the course of Jehovah-Jesus marked out: here is his work before Him. Do we ask, What Work? That of the Shepherd, gathering the lambs with his arm, and carrying

them in his bosom ;—"the Good Shepherd (John x. 11), that giveth his life for the sheep."

Is not this, then, preeminently, "the Way of Jehovah ; the highway for our God" ? Let us distinctly see this ; and we shall find no difficulty in discerning what is the predicted "preparation" of it. The "way" which the Allwise God had ever before Him was his Eternal Purpose to "bring many sons unto glory :" his "path" was the "narrow path" which leadeth unto life ; which the Father was to shew the Captain of the Salvation first (Psa. xvi. 11) ; and along which He was then to bring the given many sons. But something must be done before either.

Suddenly, another voice is heard ; not now of comfort, but of doom. A voice, pronouncing the failure and worthlessness of Flesh. As of old (Gen. vi. 13), "the end of all flesh is come [judicially] before" God ; even of the best of flesh. Man had utterly failed to satisfy God (Rom. viii. 7, 8). Jehovah had taken the seed of Abraham, and separated them from the nations for Himself ; revealed Himself peculiarly to them ; given them his ordinances ; given them a fiery Law, through ranks of Angels (Acts vii. 53) ; and said that, if they would obey Him and keep his covenant, they should be his peculiar treasure ; a kingdom of priests, and a holy nation (Exod. xix. 5, 6). Thus the Israelite, and especially the Jew, was Man under the most advantageous conditions : Flesh at its very best.

With what result? This cry of the Divine Voice. "All flesh is grass; and all the goodliness thereof [the glory of man] is as the flower of grass. The grass withereth; the flower fadeth; when the Spirit bloweth upon it. Surely the people is grass!" "Verily, every man, at his best state, is altogether vanity!" (Psa. xxxix. 5.)

This, then, is the authoritative decision of the Spirit of God, and of the Word of God. It is the concentrated decision of the whole Scripture, — very especially concentrated in this Book of the Prophet Isaiah. The Holy Law withers, condemns, and curses the flesh; and can do nothing else. Nor, after the coming of the promised Saviour, was the flesh aught improved, as the Apostle witnesses in Rom. iii.; in 1 Cor. i.; in Gal. iii. The result is uniformly the same; "That every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may become GUILTY before God."

In like manner the prophet Malachi deals with the corrupt apostate nation; the Jew alone, now left, of the House of Israel. They loudly profess to honour God, while their whole bearing is "stout against Him": they "rob God," and deal treacherously: they have "corrupted the covenant of Levi," and gone far away from the faith and obedience of their godly fathers. Yet there is, even still, "a very small remnant,"— jewels in Jehovah's eyes,—who, as of old (Isa. i. 9), preserve the foul mass from the fate of

Sodom and Gomorrah. And the awful threat of "CURSE," which had sealed the Law (Deut. xxvii 26; Gal. iii. 10), is left, like the toll of a death knell, echoing in the ears of the guilty generation. For "Curse" is the word, with which the canon of the Old Testament ominously closes!

From all this it seems indubitable that the Voice that cries in the wilderness is the voice of Law; a voice which must be heard, which must be met,—before Grace can come in. John represents the Majesty of God in Law.

And with this representative character all that we know of him agrees. The scene of his testimony,—the desert,—indicates that the land, once (Ezek. xx. 6) "the glory of all lands," is not now "a delightsome land" (Mal. iii. 12) to Jehovah. His coarse raiment and food are in harmony with a righteous God, alienated by unrepented, unconfessed sin. And though his holy asceticism is blasphemed by the blinded nation (Lu. vii. 33), as the moroseness of a demon,—a nation that could no more appreciate the "mourning" of a hiding God in John, than the "piping" of a reconciling God in Jesus;—yet Wisdom is justified in both her children.

John fitly closes the earlier dispensation: the whole legal economy of God is consummated in him. Said He who taught with authority (Lu. xvi. 16, 17), "The Law and the Prophets were until John: since that time the kingdom of God is preached, and every one is pressing into this.

But it is easier for heaven and earth to pass, than for one tittle of the Law to fail."

Is God so tenacious of his honour in the Law? Has his Law been broken by man? And does its curse lie against law-breakers? Then Death is the irreversible doom of man,—God's Spirit and Word being witnesses. Death in its uttermost penalty must be borne by every man, either personally, or putatively. "Law worketh wrath" (Rom. iv. 15).

The son of Zacharias dwelled from his childhood "in the deserts (Lu. i. 80), till the day of his shewing unto Israel." Then he began to preach the holy claims of God on a sinning people; crying, "Repent; for the kingdom of the heavens is at hand!" The coming King was at the doors: the unspeakable Gift, about to be proffered to man, was trembling in the hand of the Giver. "Righteousness-out-of-faith (ἐκ πίστεως) was about to be revealed to man, for his believing it" (εἰς πίστιν.—Rom. i. 17). They must repent: that is, thoroughly change all their thoughts about God and themselves, not merely be sorry; taking a new status altogether before Him,—even that of guilty, condemned criminals, bound hand and foot, awaiting execution. *To repent*, as regards sinners, means nothing less than this.

So the stern Voice comes down to the brink of Jordan. The surging, rushing floods were up to the brim, if not already overflowing; for it was near the vernal equinox (Josh. iii. 15; John

ii. 13). The river itself, like so many places, persons, and things, in Jehovah's land, was a symbol of solemn, mystic significance. Physically, it is a river absolutely unique in the whole world; cleft in the very bowels of the earth; being, at its issue from the Lake of Galilee, far below the sea-level; and ever plunging lower and lower, by twenty-seven distinct descents, till it empties into the Dead Sea; that horrid yawning chasm of salt and pitch and desolation, whose surface is actually 1300 feet below the Mediterranean;—the awful grave of those guilty cities, which (Jude 7) "are set forth for an example, suffering the vengeance of eternal fire." Throughout the Scripture[1] this wondrous river stands as the type of penal death;—of death issuing in hell. Its very name is a parable; whether we accept the etymology of הַיַּרְדֵּן, "the downward-plunger"; or יָאֹר־דָּן, "the River of Judgment,"—the older, and perhaps, the better one.

"Then went out to him Jerusalem, and all Judea, and all the region round about Jordan, and were baptized of him in Jordan, *confessing their sins.*" A very general conviction from the Spirit of God fell upon the whole nation; so that

[1] See, especially, the barring of the Land to Israel, and the dividing of the waters by the Ark (Josh. iii., iv.); the dividing by Elijah's mantle (2 Ki. ii. 8, 14); the cleansing of Naaman (Ib. v.); the resurrection of the iron house-builder (Ib. vi. 1–7); and the swelling of Jordan (Jer. xii. 5).

"all the people" (Lu. iii. 21) submitted themselves to his hands, and were by him put beneath the waters of Jordan. They accepted the position of condemned sinners; — probably with little or no intelligence of the typical significance of their act;—and went down into what symbolized penal death. Thus they "justified God, being baptized with the baptism of John" (Lu. vii. 29); while those who, through self-righteousness, refused to submit to the sentence, "rejected the counsel of God against themselves."

The guilty nation having, at the summons of God, put, so to speak, the halter about their necks, and presented themselves to be executed, —His "path is made plain," to act in Grace; and so He can righteously respite them, in order to bring forward his Ransom. All flesh having withered under his breath, now "all flesh shall see the Salvation of God" (Luke iii. 6)!

Baptism, then, the plunging beneath the waters, which immediately close over the baptized, —is the divinely appointed, and very striking symbol of penal death. Perhaps it would be more correct to say, of burial consequent on penal death; or, of death by burial. A putting out of sight of God.[1]

That the whelming of waters over the sinking

[1] "Thou wilt not leave my soul in hades." The generally accepted etymology of this word, ἀΐδης, is from *a priv.*, and ἰδεῖν, to see; *what is out of sight.* (See Jonah ii. 4.)

sufferer is a frequent figure of the punitive wrath of God, every reader of Scripture knows. The flood of Noah brought upon the world of the ungodly (2 Pet. ii. 5); the Red Sea (Exod. xiv.), and the Jordan (Josh. iv.), each in turn divided for his people, by Jehovah Himself *going before them;* the terrors expressed by the Lord Jesus, of the deep mire, where there is no standing (Psa. lxix. 2, 14); of the waters which are come in unto his soul; of the deep waters where the floods overflow Him; of the water-flood and of the deep that would swallow Him up (Ibid. 1, 2, 14, 15); the like experience of the prophet Jonas,—that sole sign vouchsafed to an evil generation,—who "cried, out of the belly of hell," in the words of his great Antitype, "All thy waves and thy billows have gone over me!" (Psa. xlii. 7; Jon. ii. 3). All these, and others, abundantly warrant the assertion that a burial beneath waters is a divine symbolization of the penal wrath of God.

V.

BAPTISM (Jesus).

We have seen that Matt. iii. presents a vivid picture of a transaction of exceeding importance in the Divine economy:—nothing less than the righteous consummation of the Dispensation of Law, and the righteous introduction of the Dispensation of Grace. Law had been in operation, ostensibly,[1] for more than four thousand years; and the dread result was—Death. "By deeds of Law shall no flesh be justified in God's sight: for by Law is full-knowledge of Sin" (Rom. iii. 20). It drags sin into a blaze of light, but finds no remedy for it. "I had not known sin, but by the Law" (Ib. vii. 7).

If the Holy Ghost had not advanced his grand drama beyond the sixth verse, there would have been no "comfort for Jerusalem" (Isa. xl. 1, 2); no "accomplished warfare"; no "pardoned iniquity." The death of the sinner does not pardon him. God would, indeed, have been

[1] I say *ostensibly*; because, *really*, God had been acting in Grace from the very day that sin came in, anticipating the atoning work of Christ. For the Lamb was slain from the foundation of the world.

justified in his severity: but his "Work" would not have been achieved. The sinner would have remained under Death. John, indeed, is seen whelming a guilty people under Jordan; but not a glimpse of his lifting one of them out. The Spirit's significant silence *leaves them there.*

From the lamb offered in the garden (Gen. iii. 21) to the Lamb on the cross,—the ordinance of animal-sacrifice, throughout the legal dispensation, had ever proclaimed aloud the awful truth, "Without shedding of blood is no remission" (Heb. ix. 22). But the unsearchable wisdom, the exceeding becomingness, wherewith the Allsufficient God stilled the Enemy and Avenger, lay in this: that, while the law-breaker must die, *he might die by proxy,* if a Proxy, adequate and willing, could be found. And that such an one had been found! even the Only Begotten Son, who had said, "Lo, I come, to do thy will, O God!"

So, in the body prepared for Him, the "Meek and Lowly in heart," yet "God the Mighty Man" (Isa. ix. 6); the Everlasting Word made flesh;—comes to the brink of Jordan, to be baptized of John. But "John forbad Him." Whether, for the moment, forgetting his typical character, and thinking only of the personal character of the Lamb without blemish and without spot; or quailing at the thought of dealing in judgment with One who is Judge of all;—John shrank back, saying, "It were fit that

I should be plunged under this flood by Thee; and comest Thou to me?" And this was true. John was himself, by nature, a lost sinner, under the common sentence of death eternal; and the Man before him was the Law-giver, the Arbiter of death and life.

But Jesus, who never for an instant forgot *his* place, recals his honoured servant by a word. "Suffer it to be so *now!*" On this special occasion: for a special purpose: with a special reason:—let this incongruity pass, that the Righteous One suffer the law-breaker's doom, as under its righteous curse.[1] And then He adds the constraining reason: "For thus it becometh us (*πρέπον ἐστὶν ἡμῖν*) to fulfil all righteousness."

These words, brief as they were, had weight to bring back John, in an instant, to the calm dignity of his official position. For "then he suffered Him." Let us weigh them, with diligent heed, that we may discern where their force lay. And all the more, because, in general, this seems to be very dimly discerned.

"Thus":—In this way. By what is portrayed in this shadow. By my penal death.

"Us." Here are two parties, each of whom has a great rôle to perform. John's part is the

1 "God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made *under the Law;* to redeem them that were *under the Law*" (Gal. iv. 4). Is not this, under *the sentence of* the Law, in the former, as well as the latter clause?

part of God's Holy Law. The Law must inflict its penalty, or God's attributes are forfeited. Jesus's part is "to put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself" (Heb. ix. 26); to be made sin (2 Cor. v. 21); to be made a curse (Gal. iii. 13); to once suffer for sins, the Just for the unjust (1 Pet. iii. 18). So, it becometh us,—thee and Me; each to bear his part.

"Righteousness." "All righteousness." "To fulfil all righteousness." The Law's claim was righteous: for "the Law is holy, and just, and good" (Rom. vii. 12). And Messiah's payment of the claim was righteous; inasmuch as Law had no personal demand of Him; and what He was about to do would satisfy and annul all its claims on those for whom He stood. And, since the uttermost claims of God's Law would thus be answered, this conjoint action, of John and Jesus, would fulfil [fill to the full] *all* righteousness.

"It becometh." Here is recalled that thought of the "Great Becomingness" of God, which, in Psa. viii. 1, and Heb. ii. 10, has already been noticed. We are here taught that what the Son was about to do, in going down into death and the grave, was something well worthy of Him: while the exaction of the death-penalty was not less eminently becoming to God, and to God's Law.

Jesus was baptized in Jordan. In his submission to the ordinance, the floods, indeed, went

over Him, but in symbol only. We may not suppose that any actual suffering, of body, mind, or spirit, befel Him under John's hands. It was but the fore-acting and fore-enduring, in type, of that agony of body, when the blood-sweat forced its way; when the ploughers ploughed upon his back; when the nails pierced his hands and his feet; when his tongue clave to his jaws; and He was brought into the dust of death. Of that distress of mind that made Him to be sore amazed and very heavy; to be exceeding sorrowful, even unto death; when his heart was like wax, melted in the midst of his bowels. Of that horror and great darkness upon his spirit, when the face of God was hidden; when He cried that exceeding bitter cry, "My God! My God! why hast Thou forsaken Me!" when, in hot displeasure, Jehovah's arrows stuck fast in Him; when the iniquities of us all—"*mine* iniquities" He called them (Psa. xxxviii. 4)—had gone over his head; and when his feet sank in the mire where there was no standing; when the pains of hell gat hold upon Him.

But a fact is recorded now, which is of unspeakable importance; since it changes the whole aspect of the rite, adding a new element to it, and betokening a quite new relation of man to God. "Jesus, when He was baptized, went up, straightway, out of the water." He who had plunged Him under, lifted Him out:—a new and significant feature! For this is Resurrection.

The very hand that inflicts the penalty, even that of God's Law, "looses the pains of death; because it was not possible that He should be holden of it" (Acts ii. 24). And, with a most meaning silence, this had not been predicated of any of the multitudes yet baptized. For of Christ alone can it be said, that He abolished death, and brought life and immortality to light (2 Tim. i. 10); being "the first to rise from the dead" (Ac. xxvi. 22).

And now,—Death, Burial, and Resurrection having been acted by the Surety in this remarkable Rehearsal,—the "Path" and the "Work" of Jehovah, in Grace to man, are "plain": and there immediately follow three distinct manifestations of Divine acceptance and approval. The grandeur and importance of these are marked, and commended to our attention, by the word Lo! twice repeated. "Behold! and duly consider what is now to be narrated!"

For the special value of these immediate results of our Surety's work lies in this: that they were given to Him not as to the Eternal Word; nor even as to the holy Son of Man Jesus;—but as to the Christ; *i.e.* as the mystic composite Man of many members.[1] The Church is chosen in Him: complete in Him: made the

[1] This distinction (between Jesus and the Christ) is well preserved in Rom. viii. 11; where it is very significant. The Christ includes all the members, as well as the Head. (See also 1 Cor. xii. 12.)

Righteousness of God in Him: one body in Christ: a new creation in Christ: quickened together with the Christ. As the glorious Leader (Heb. ii. 10) "took part of the same flesh and blood" as the sons whom He undertook to bring to God's glory; so, He being raised, we are taught (Rom. vi. 1–11) to reckon ourselves partakers of his risen life with its new conditions. It is of vital importance that we bear this in mind, if we would discern the spiritual value of these consequents of our Lord's baptism.

1.—An opened Heaven. "Lo! the heavens were opened unto Him." Of Himself, in person, and yet as Head of his body, we have abundant testimony that "He is gone into heaven, and is on the right hand of God." "The Chariots of God," says a grand Psalm, "are twenty thousand, even thousands of Angels. The Lord is among them as in Sinai, in the holy place. Thou hast ascended on high" (Psa. lxviii. 17, 18). But this is true of the Church also; for "God . . hath co-quickened us, and co-raised us, and co-seated us in the Superheavenlies, in Christ Jesus" (Eph. ii. 4–6). Believers, now, "through Him (made nigh by his blood) have access . . to the Father" (13–18).

The heaven of God's immediate presence was typified, of old, by the inner chamber of the Tabernacle; wherein was the Ark of the Covenant, covered by the Mercy-seat, on which ever sat

the Shechinah of Glory between the Cherubim. But it was shut off from view by the Veil, which might be lifted by the high priest alone; and by him only once a year; and then with solemn and special guards, "lest he die" (Lev. xvi.). "The Holy Ghost this signifying, that the way into the Holiest was not yet made open" (Heb. ix. 8). Aaron, doubtless, while duly valuing the peculiar honour of thus beholding the Glory of God, would yet, as the tenth day of the seventh month approached, feel a trembling anxiety, lest some prescribed accompaniment, some precaution, should be forgotten; and, as he entered the Holiest, the awful threat, "THAT HE DIE NOT," would ring terribly in his ears.

But, Christ having entered by his own blood, and that into heaven itself, "we have *boldness* and access by the faith of Him" (Eph. iii. 12). This boldness or liberty, sweetly contrasting with the awful terrors that surrounded Aaron's access, is much insisted on by the Spirit. The establishing of this is the central aim of the Epistle to the Hebrews. In x. 19–22, it is thus summed up: "Having . . boldness to enter into the Holiest by the blood of Jesus, by a new and living way, which He new-made for us, through the veil, that is, his flesh;—and having a great Priest over the House of God,—let us draw near—." And again (xii. 28), "let us hold fast, with reverence and godly fear, a grace through which we can serve (λατρεύωμεν) God with

acceptance."[1] Let us see that we abuse not, by unholy irreverence, a privilege so inestimable as this, of drawing, and remaining, nigh to God. In Psalms xv. and xxiv., the moral qualifications are announced, requisite for standing in his holy place: and we perceive that they are found in but One, the King of Glory; in whose perfection we poor sinners stand. And what the unutterable joy of the privilege is, we learn from his own anticipation, uttered (Psa. xvi. 11) as He looked up from the gates of Hades: "In thy presence is fulness of joy; at thy right hand are pleasures for evermore!"

2.—An abiding Holy Ghost. "He [*i.e.* John;—see John i. 32, 33] saw the Spirit descending (in a bodily shape, like a dove, Lu. iii. 22) and remaining on Him." The emphatic point appears to be the *remaining*, or *abiding*. Here, again, our thought must be turned to the mystical Christ, and specially in his members. For Himself, we know, from John's own testimony (John iii. 34), that the Spirit was his without measure; and I am not aware of any special augmentation of the Spirit,—if, indeed, augmentation of what is without measure, is conceivable,—

[1] One feels inclined to quote the venerable Form of Praise of the ancient church:—"Thou [O Christ] hast opened the kingdom of heaven to all believers." But the phrase "the kingdom of heaven," as used in the Gospels, is not quite equivalent to "heaven": and "entrance into the kingdom" is not exactly the same thing as access to God.

to Himself *personally*, in consequence of his Atonement and Resurrection.

But to his Church there was. In his Discourse the night He was betrayed, He expressly promised (John xiv.–xvi. *passim*) the Spirit, the Comforter, as the fruit of his ascension; and particularly emphasized his abiding with them, "unto the dispensation." As in the glorious Ascension-psalm, already cited (Psa. lxviii. 18), it is predicted;—"Thou hast ascended on high: . . Thou hast received Gifts for men; yea, for the rebellious even, that Jah God might dwell among them." Here, the dwelling of Jehovah among men,—*i.e.* Jehovah the Spirit, surely (see Eph. iv. 4–10), is a prominent theme.

But was there anything peculiar in this,—viz. in *his abiding*; that prophets and apostles, that John and Jesus, should make so much of it? If we had regard to the habitual mode of thought, and mode of utterance, of Christians generally in the present day, we should say, No; there is nothing in it; nothing that is not constantly ignored. Is it not almost universal; is it not considered the proper and decorous thing, for those who express the desires of believers at public Prayer-meetings and the like, to beseech God, with importunity, to "pour out his Holy Spirit upon us"? But what is this, but to deny, or at least to ignore, the great fact of the Blessed Spirit's indwelling in every believer (John xiv. 17), and abiding through the age (ver. 16)? Having been

once fully poured out, first on Israel (Acts ii.), and then on Gentiles (x. 44, 45),—his head-quarters, so to speak, are no longer in heaven, but on earth: as those of the Lord Jesus are no longer on earth, but in heaven:—and He cannot be "poured out" any more, while the Church remains on earth.[1] When the Church is complete, and caught away to her Lord, it appears that the Spirit accompanies her. After that, He is again to be "poured out," on the restored and forgiven House of Israel, and the saved Nations. (See Joel ii. 28; Ezek. xxxvi. 27; xxxix. 29; etc.) We may well ask for a mightier energizing of the Spirit within us; for more of his effectual power with our efforts; for more obedience to his monitions; but not for an outpouring of Him, at present.

But how do the Spirit's presence and work, as given to the risen Church, differ from what had been known before? Much reverent caution is needed here, for there is no direct inspired utterance on the point. Yet that there was a great difference is plain from what has been cited; and that it mainly consisted in his *abiding*. Probably, in his operations on saints and prophets of old, the Spirit came and went; "holy men spake as they were borne [as if out of them-

[1] There is no question of the illimitable Godhead of the Holy Ghost, any more than of the Son. But of his personal, official presence, as the Comforter, during the personal absence of the Son.

selves] by the Holy Ghost" (2 Pet. i. 21). He visited them; used them; but did not dwell, abide, in them. And so David prays (Psa. li. 11), "Take not thy Holy Spirit from me";—which I do not think an instructed Christian could pray, in whatever depth of penitence.

3.—Sonship to God. "Lo! a voice from heaven, saying, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well-pleased!" At first, we are ready to say, *This* belongs peculiarly and exclusively to our adored Lord, the personal Jesus. But a moment's reflection will convince us that this, too, He shares with us. The very indwelling of the Spirit (Gal. iv. 6) is *because* we are sons of God; for the Spirit is the Spirit of sonship (Rom. viii. 14–17), whereby we cry, Abba, Father! This relationship, as we have before seen, formed the Eternal Purpose of the Father; to bring his "many sons" to glory was the work of the Son; to remove the obstacle which sin presented to this, He took part of the children's flesh and blood, suffered, and died. And now, having, in figure, come up out of the floods of death, He receives, for Himself and his co-raised Members, this public declaration of accepted Sonship. And He responds,—"Behold I, and the Children whom God hath given Me!"

VI.

BAPTISM (Believers).

Baptism, as a ceremony, or ordinance, or duty, to which all should submit who profess and call themselves Christians,—has been adopted by the Church, almost uniformly ;—*semper, ubique, et ab omnibus.* Our Lord's last words to his disciples, recorded in each of the synoptical Gospels, indicate, either directly and plenarily, or by implication, his will, that all who are incorporated into his visible church should be baptized. Unhappily, there has existed, from a very early age, a diversity of judgment on the questions, What is the distinctive character of the Church ? and Who are its constituents ? and therefore on the parallel question, Who are the proper subjects for baptism ?

It may clear our vision, in examining these questions, to look carefully at each of those last recorded instructions of our Lord.

The words found in Matt. xxviii. 16-20, we may accept as the most formal and full instruction given for the laying of the foundation of the Church; to be presently augmented and replenished, but not altered or displaced, by the

outpoured Spirit. Falling back on the "all authority given Him in heaven and earth," even "over all flesh" (cf. John xvii. 2), He says, "Go forth, and disciple all the nations, baptizing them [viz. the disciples, not the nations[1]] into the Name, etc."

Thus, it is *disciples* that are to be baptized; and these must be first *made*. Hence baptism must follow, not precede, that divine change wherein a dead soul is quickened into life.[2]

The words reported by Mark (xvi. 15), were probably uttered at the same time, and (so to speak) in the same breath. While in substance the same, Mark's order is more definite than Matthew's. Preaching first: then believing; then baptism.

In Luke (xxiv. 46) the word "baptize" does not occur; but the discourse seems the same. "Preaching among all nations," agrees with Matthew and Mark: the allusion to "repentance and remission of sins in (ἐπὶ) his Name," anti-

[1] The English reader should be told that, in the original, the word "*nations*" is of the neuter gender; but "*them*" is masculine, and thus cannot refer to nations, but to *disciples* (*μαθητὰς*), implied in the verb *μαθητεύσατε*, "*make disciples from.*"

[2] It is unworthy special-pleading to say that unconscious infants are *disciples*, from our Lord's words in Matt. xviii. 5, and in Mark x. 14. He does not say that the kingdom of God is composed of *them*; but of *such*:—a very weighty distinction! For what Jesus means by *disciples*, see Luke xiv. 26, 27, 33.

cipates the very terms in which the first great Baptism was offered (Acts ii. 38), only a few weeks afterwards.

If now we examine the practice of the apostolic Church, we find this sense of our Lord's commands amply confirmed. To the devout Jews who gathered to the marvels of the out-poured Holy Ghost (Acts ii.), Peter, having preached Jesus raised and ascended, as Lord and Christ, —says, "Repent; and be baptized into this Name!" Three thousand responded, and were baptized. Who were these? "They that gladly received his word." Notice, 1. the *reception* of the tidings; and 2. (what we shall find so characteristic) the *gladness* that accompanied the reception.[1]

At the city of Samaria (Acts viii.), "when they believed Philip preaching . . the Name of Jesus Christ, they were baptized." Even "Simon himself believed also," before he was baptized. Whatever his inward condition in the eye of God, he was baptized, *as a believer*.

The same Philip next meets the Eunuch. He opens the evangelic Prophet, and preaches Jesus. The stranger asks for baptism; which, of course, implies that the duty had been pressed upon him, even in that first and only interview which the Christian minister had, or was likely to have, with him. If the reply (37) is genuine,

[1] If there is some doubt of ἀσμένως in ver. 41; there is no doubt of ἀγαλλιάσει in ver. 46.

it is conclusive of the fact that *heart-belief* was imperative before baptism. If it is interpolated, there remains the fact that the eunuch was regenerate; for there was the Divine element of holy joy. "He went on his way rejoicing."

Saul of Tarsus (ix. 6, 17) had yielded himself to the glorified Jesus, in the words, "Lord! what wilt Thou have me to do!" And Ananias called him Brother, before his baptism.

Cornelius, and his company of Gentiles, heard Peter's preaching, and believed on Jesus (x. 44–47), before they were baptized. For the Holy Ghost was poured out on them, manifestly.

And now to the gospel-labours of Paul. We find no mention of baptism in his first journey through Asia Minor. But we have (xiv. 21) a very interesting side-light cast on an earlier passage. When they had preached the gospel at Derbe, "and *had discipled many* . . " Now the phrase is identical with that used by the Lord in Matt. xxviii. 19.—"*μαθητεύσαντες ἱκανούς*": and we see what these "disciples" were; since (ver. 22) their souls were "confirmed"; and they were exhorted to "continue in the faith": while these very disciples are immediately recognised as constituting "churches."

At the first step of the Apostle on the soil of Europe, we have repeated baptisms. Lydia (Acts xvi.) was already a worshipper. Her heart the Lord opened under Paul's preaching, and then she was baptized. The missionaries

are now cast into a Roman dungeon. The brutal jailor is miraculously convicted; cries for salvation; is pointed to Jesus; and is baptized, *rejoicing*.

At Corinth Paul "continued a year and six months (xviii.) teaching the word of God." And with much success; for "many of the Corinthians hearing, believed, and were baptized."

The Epistle to the Colossians is addressed to "saints and faithful brethren." These had been baptized (ii. 12) as co-buried and co-raised with Christ.

The Epistle to the Romans is addressed to "the beloved of God; called to be saints." These had been baptized (vi. 3–5) as co-slain, co-buried, and co-raised, with Christ.

Thus far the scriptural testimony—and we have examined not a few witnesses—has been uniform to the practice of the Apostolic Church. But were there really no exceptions to the rule, that only believers were baptized? It is contended that, since "households" were baptized, little children must have been included. The reasoning is specious, and should be candidly examined.

Let us first understand the question at issue. The phrases "adult baptism," "infant baptism," "pædobaptist," are improper, and misleading. The point is not between adults and children, but between believers and unbelievers. If little children are believers, youth is no objection.

That the Spirit can work a living faith in very little children, there is abundant precious evidence. We only ask whether children, who give no evidence of saving faith, or who are as yet incapable of faith, may be baptized.

The "households" baptized in Scripture, are but three: of Lydia, and of the Jailor, at Philippi, and of Stephanas at Corinth.

1.—Lydia was a woman engaged in a very important and lucrative business,—the sale of woollen yarn, dyed with the famous Tyrian purple; a business well suited to a lady of middle age, of independent means. Her home was at Thyatira, near Smyrna; and she evidently travelled, with her very portable[1] and valuable ware, probably to cities where Roman luxury and fashion offered a fair market. Philippi was a Roman colony. We may conjecture from these data the nature of her household. She had a house of her own, in which she was sole mistress: she says "My house"; and invites Paul and his company to abide there. No husband is mentioned: but she had, of course, servants, who aided in the business; perhaps female slaves. She was surely a middle-aged maiden-lady, or a widow. Is there the slightest

[1] We are informed by Pliny the elder, who lived at the very time, that 1 lb. of double-dyed Tyrian purple would fetch in the market of Rome about £30 sterling. Thus a lady could handle, with ease, a parcel worth a thousand pounds.

probability that this household contained unconscious infants?

2.—The Jailor. Here we are not left to conjecture. The word had been spoken "to *all* that were *in his house.*" He "rejoiced, believing in God, *with all his house.*" If all the house, as well as he, heard, believed, and rejoiced, what wonder that "he and all his, were baptized straightway"? Where are unconscious infants, in this household?

3.—Paul says (1 Cor. i. 16) that he "baptized the household of Stephanas." This letter he wrote in A.D. 57. It was in the year 52 that the first tidings of the gospel came to Corinth (Ac. xviii.). In the same Epistle (xvi. 15), we find that the household of Stephanas "had addicted themselves to the ministry." Could this household have been unconscious infants in 52, when they were baptized, since in 57 Paul can thus commend their ministry, which too was *pastoral?*

With these vanishes every vestige of Scriptural authority for baptizing unconscious infants. There is absolutely no other.[1]

[1] "Else were your children *unclean;* but now are they *holy*" (1 Cor. vii. 14),—is quite irrelevant; for the whole context shows that not church-fellowship is treated, but private personal companionship. The words signify *unfit,* or *fit,* for a place in the family of a Christian.

The argument that, since infants were admitted by circumcision into the Mosaic covenant, they should be admitted by baptism into the Church,—is hardly worthy of refutation. Those who use it do not see that an

If, then, believers, and none but believers, were admitted to baptism,—have we any light, from the Apostolic Scriptures, to determine what was intended by the rite?

It has been shewn that, in John's baptizing of the people, were pictured the penal death of sinners, and their burial out of God's sight, as if abhorred. And in his baptizing of Jesus, were pictured the same, with the important addition of *righteous* resurrection.

The Apostle, writing to the saints at Colosse, reminds them (Col. ii. 10–15), that they "had been filled to the full in Christ"; that they "had been circumcised, putting off the body of the flesh, in Christ's circumcision"; "co-buried[1] with Him in baptism, wherein also they had been co-raised, through believing the work of God, raising *Him* out of the dead."

Writing to the saints at Rome he uses similar language (vi. 3–7): "Know ye not"—so that the teaching of the rite was then fully recognised in the Churches!—"that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ, into the death of

antitype is always on *a higher level* than its type. Those were born by natural generation; and their status was earthly. Sons of God are "born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh."

[1] By this prefix "co-," I attempt to indicate a peculiar and significant force in the original; the preposition σὺν being prefixed to the verb, and united with it. It implies that Christ and the believer were included in *one and the same* action.

Him were baptized? Thus, we were co-buried with Him by that baptism into death: that, like as *Christ* was raised from the dead, . . . so also *we* should walk about in a new condition of life. For if we were made co-plants in what pictured his death, we must be also in what pictured his resurrection."

In close agreement with these teachings of Paul is the oracle of Peter. Alluding to the Flood, and to the Ark wherein a few had been saved, he says (1 Pet. iii. 21), "which thing, as a figure, even baptism, now saves you;—not a putting off the filth of flesh, but the answer[1] of a conscience good toward God through the resurrection of Jesus Christ." That is, the baptized professes, in baptism, that the resurrection of Christ has given what the Law could not give (Heb. x. 2); viz. to have no more conscience of guilt.

John appears to have baptized disciples even after Jesus had been baptized (John iii. 23): and Jesus himself baptized (iii. 26; iv. 1, 2), though not with his own hands. If I am right in concluding that the difference between John's baptizing of the people, and his baptizing of Jesus, was that the former terminated in death, while the latter went on to resurrection,—we may assume that Apollos, before he learned of Aquila and Priscilla (Acts xviii. 25), and the twelve dis-

[1] The word ἐπερώτημα is properly an *interrogation* or *examination:* but it seems here to mean the *result* of examination:—what the believer says when examined.

ciples at Ephesus (xix. 1), before they learned of Paul,—had mystically submitted to death; and so had justified God; but knew not that Christ had brought life and immortality to light.

The Apostles do not appear to have been baptized at, or after, Pentecost. So, as they were surely baptized into Christ's resurrection, as well as his death, we must presume that Jesus's baptism (John iv. 1) had the full significance of the Christian rite; that, by *anticipation*, they were baptized into the common Body (1 Cor. xii. 13); though the proper corporate life did not begin till the descent of the Holy Ghost at Pentecost.

Two wide-spread, and long-during opinions have been held concerning Baptism;—the one that it expresses cleansing; the other that it is a sign, or pledge, of the New Birth. The former seems admissible, in a subordinate aspect.

Throughout Scripture the death of Christ appears under the aspect of a cleansing from impurity. Its prime idea is doubtless the forensic one:—every child of Adam is *guilty*: he is under sentence of death; and the penalty must be exacted. But he is also *unclean*, leprous, odious, in God's holy eyes;—*sinful*, as well as *guilty*. The prophets speak of a "Fountain—for sin and *uncleanness*." The Apostle gives praise to "Him who *washed* us from our sins in his own blood"; and the robes, in which the redeemed appear, are "*washed* and made *white* in the blood of the Lamb." (Rev. i. 5; vii. 14; etc.)

It is, however, the *penal death* of Jesus, that is referred-to. It is the *Blood* that cleanses (Lev. xiv. 15); the blood shed without the camp. "It is the Blood that maketh atonement by means of the life" (xvii. 11). Ananias (Acts xxii. 16) appears to have had this aspect in view, when he said to Saul, "Be baptized, and *wash away* thy sins"; using the same word as is used in Rev. i. 5. But I am not aware of a single passage besides, in which the idea of cleansing enters into this ordinance.

Is baptism signified in such phrases as "washed as to the body" (Heb. x. 22); or Christ's "cleansing his Church by the laver of water in the word" (Eph. v. 26); or "the laver of regeneration" (Tit. iii. 5); or the being "born out of water and spirit" (John iii. 5)? Common as is such use of this last word, it is more than doubtful. The allusion is rather to the promise in Ezekiel xxxvi. 25–27, made to Israel—"earthly things," ver. 12,—and also to that striking fact avouched by this very Apostle, with solemn asseveration, on his own autoptic testimony (xix. 34, 35). "One of the soldiers . . . pierced his side, and forthwith came thereout blood and water": which fact he again states, with much emphasis (1 John v. 6);—"This is He that came through water and blood, Jesus the Christ: not in the water only, but in the water and the blood: . . . the Spirit, and the water, and the blood: and these Three are for the one [end]."

In all this there appears no reference to baptism; but to the twofold aspect of the atonement. It cannot be expressed better than by Toplady:—

> "Let the water, and the blood,
> From thy riven side which flowed,
> Be of sin the double cure,
> Cleanse me from its guilt, and power!"

To ascribe to the mere performance of the rite upon the body, a spiritual change of the most stupendous character, in the person so treated, is not only without any real support from Scripture, but quite contrary to all its teaching. The Lord says (John v. 24), "he that believeth on Him that sent Me, is passed out of death into life." Here is, indeed, a momentous change! But does He ever hint that a mere ceremony, performed on an unconscious infant, passes that infant out of death into life? A child is not born-again in baptism: that effect is no more the result of the will of man, than it is of blood (John i. 13).

The sum is this.—Christian Baptism is a solemn act, in which a believer, plunged under water by another, and lifted out,—professes that he has penally died under Divine wrath; has been buried; and has been raised; by the operation of God, in Law, on the Person of Christ. By which act he is formally incorporated in the visible Church; and thus, *ex professo*, he has put-on Christ.

VII.

THE RESURRECTION OF THE BODY.

It can hardly escape the notice of any thoughtful reader of Scripture, that Resurrection,—the quickening of the Body into a new life, after it has sunk into the sleep of death,—has a place in the thoughts of the Holy Ghost, beyond comparison more prominent than it has in that of most Christians. With the unregenerate world, one does not wonder that it should be so. The grave to them is dark indeed; through which not a gleam of light penetrates. What wonder that a "settled gloom" rests on the future, bearable only by refusing to look it in the face; by desperately fixing the gaze everywhere, anywhere, rather than there!

> "Which will not look beyond the tomb,
> Yet cannot hope for rest before!"

But it is not of the world that I speak,—the world that lieth in the wicked one, like a child in its mother's arms, whom the wicked one lulls to sleep with a thousand opiates! By real believers, often devout, and practically holy, with the feelings exercised to obedience,—"the

Resurrection-glory, the only Hope, of which the gospel witnesses . . is almost lost sight of, except in theory: while, in its stead, Death is proposed to all, . . as that which brings-in the consummation of the Christian's hope, and the fulfilment of all his desires. The principle is carried out in the whole course of popular interpretation of Scripture, in public discourses, and in individual experience: little beyond this is spoken of, or rested upon."[1] How common is it to hear godly persons alluding to their departed friends; and godly persons themselves anticipating their own approaching departure, in language which Scripture uses exclusively of saints after the Resurrection and the Rapture!

When the Lord said to Martha weeping over dead Lazarus, "Thy brother shall rise again!"—the assurance poured no sensible comfort into her heart, and elicited no smile of hope. She coldly replied, "I know that he will rise again, in the Resurrection at the last day." Thousands of Christians would answer in the very same cold way. She was quite orthodox: she believed in the Resurrection as a Doctrine; as did the Pharisees (Acts xxiii. 6). Jesus answered, "I am Resurrection and Life!" But this Martha had yet to learn. The correct Pharisees had not learned it. Paul had not, in his Pharisaic days: but now he had (Phil. iii. 10); and oh! what a

[1] "Resurrection, not Death, the hope of the Believer." —Campbell.

difference to him! He had counted all things loss, to know the *power* of Christ's resurrection: to "attain by any means, unto the resurrection out of the dead [ones]."

The Holy Ghost's first work, at Pentecost, was to show (Acts ii.) that the resurrection of the Messiah was the great theme of Prophecy; and that "this Jesus hath God raised up." The healing of the lame man at the Beautiful Gate (iii.) was evidence that "the Prince of Life God had raised from the dead." When the Apostles (iv.) are dragged before the magnates, "grieved that they preached through Jesus the resurrection from the dead," they do not waver in their testimony, that it is "by the Name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom ye crucified, whom God raised from the dead,—even by Him doth this man stand before you whole." And when again put into prison (v.), they have still but one burden; "the God of our fathers raised up Jesus, whom ye slew." And still; and, so to speak, habitually; "with great power gave the Apostles witness of the resurrection of the Lord Jesus." Peter's Gospel to the Gentiles at Cesarea (x. 40); Paul's to the Gentiles at Antioch (xiii. 30); at Athens (xvii. 31); to the Jews at Jerusalem (xxiii. 6); to the Roman Court at Cesarea (xxiv. 21); before Agrippa and Festus (xxvi. 6–8; 23):—all these were made to turn upon the grand pivot, that God had really raised Jesus. When the same apostle (1 Cor. xv.) would

declare the Gospel which he habitually preached, he sums it up in this;—"that Christ died for our sins . . ; that He was buried; and that He was raised the third day, according to the Scriptures." And he proceeds to show, with consummate power, how all our hope rests on this.

The tendency to disparage what God so greatly magnifies; or, at least, the failure to allow it any power over the affections, may perhaps be traced to that "show of wisdom in will-worship, and abjectness, and mortification of the body," which Paul (ii. 23) reproved in the Colossian church. It was a notion cherished in the heathen philosophies; taught by the Gnostics in early Christianity; and perpetuated by Monks and Hermits in Popery;—that matter was, essentially and inseparably, polluting; that sin resided in the body; that the separation of the "immortal" soul from the mortal body must be its deliverance from a clog and weight; and so always to be desired. Hence the advantage of fasts, flagellations, and various inflictions, whereby the body was to be starved, and reduced to powerlessness. The "body" was confounded with "the flesh"; as perpetuity of existence was, and is, confounded with "immortality."

In such Christians as would sincerely repudiate these errors, there yet often lurks an undetected proneness to associate the idea of sin with the body, rather than with the immaterial soul. Such forms of evil as patent bodily acts;

the various phases of uncleanness; brutality, drunkenness, and the like; are much more noticed, as *sins*, than those more recondite inward tempers and feelings, which (Mark vii. 20–23) "come from within, and defile the man." And then insinuates itself the Gnostic thought, that it is pious to think of *the soul* as being the man; and *the body* as his incumbering fetters, which the sooner he can throw off, the better.

In the Word of God, the body takes a very different place. In the Narrative of Creation it appears (Gen. ii. 7) that the body of Adam was formed first; and then into it, as yet lifeless, Jehovah Elohim breathed a breath of life; and man became a living soul. The importance which God attaches to the body, as an essential constituent of man's being, is well shown in our Lord's argument with the Sadducees (Matt. xxii. 31). It was not a question of the continued existence of separate spirits (as often ignorantly expounded), but one "touching the Resurrection of *the dead*": therefore of Abraham's *body*; since that was all of him that *was* dead. Now the covenant-promises had been made to Abraham, a whole man:—not to his spirit only, a half man. And God, in calling Himself the God of Abraham, implies his obligation to restore a body to Abraham, in order that he may enjoy the fruition of the promises, *as an entire man*; in the integrity of his being; as he had received them. (See Heb. xi. 40.)

Death has spoiled man, a compound being, by destroying his corporeal moiety. And if, indeed, God hath spoken (Acts iii. 21) by all his Prophets, of a restitution (ἀποκατάστασις) of all things, man's body must be restored to at least its pristine condition of vigorous and powerful life. Thus Paul, in his defence before Agrippa (Acts xxvi. 6–8), speaks definitely of resurrection, as "the Hope promised by God to the fathers."

In the Epistle to the Hebrews use is frequently made of a word which has much puzzled commentators. It is the verb τελειόω (with its cognates), which properly signifies "to complete," "to finish,"—from τέλος, "an end." In the Engl. Vers. (mostly unchanged in the Rev. Vers.), it is commonly rendered "to make perfect." It is repeatedly used of our Lord. It was difficult to suggest any sense in which He could be made perfect; and commentators have usually sought a lame subterfuge, by explaining it, in spite of context, as a consecration to, or completion of, his office as High Priest, by death! As if death could complete any one!

But, bearing in mind that Resurrection completes, perfects, the being of Man, dislocated and violently torn asunder, by death; and brings him to that condition for which he had been created; there is no difficulty in seeing that "to make perfect," in this Epistle, means, definitely, *to bring to the resurrection state.* Let us examine the passages, *seriatim.*

1. Heb. ii. 10.—It was becoming in God the Father *to make perfect* the Leader of Salvation, through sufferings. That the Eternal Purpose was to bring to glory, many, whom He had chosen,—is clear. That the Son had undertaken the task, is equally clear. Where was this Glory? In a region far above all heavens: far beyond the intrusion of sorrow: far beyond the dominion of death. And where were the sons? In this sin-cursed world: under the irrevocable sentence of death. It was one phase of the Great Becomingness of God, that the Only Begotten should come into this condemned and mortal flesh and blood, "taking part of the same"; that the "body prepared for Him" should become a dead body; that he should suffer the dissevering of his spirit from his body. Thus, for a while, He became an imperfect Man, retaining life in only one constituent of his manhood, viz. the separate spirit. Such conditions were the common lot of his "brethren": and into fellowship with such degradations and humiliations of humanity He came down. (See Phil. ii. 7, 8.)

But God raised Him from the dead: and He presented Himself, *in his raised body*, no more to return to corruption (Acts xiii. 34), to his disciples, who did eat and drink with Him; who saw Him with their eyes, who looked upon Him, whose hands handled Him. He was now a perfect Man, over whom death had no power; who

dieth no more, but hath left Death and Hades, conquered, spoiled, behind Him.

With what a force and propriety is it said that it became God to perfect the Son through death-sufferings!

2. Ib. v. 9.—The same Blessed Son is presented in the same penal sufferings, from which He is said to have *learned* obedience. He had, long before, in the Eternal Council, yielded his own will to the Father; but He had never, till now, sounded, in actual experience, the depths to which that obedience would lead. But, from those sufferings *being made perfect*,—lifted to the condition of perfected Manhood, in the resurrection of the body, He became the Author, or procuring Cause, of eternal salvation.

3. Ib. vii. 28.—The same meaning attaches to the participle here, rendered, in A.V., *consecrated*. The salient point in the Melchizedek priesthood, on which the Holy Ghost is dilating, is its abidingness. "Thou art a Priest for ever," Jehovah said to the Adon (Psa. cx. 1). The Aaronic priests "were not suffered to continue by reason of death; but this One, because He continueth ever, hath an unchangeable (an untransferrible) priesthood." But it is Resurrection that makes this vital difference. Not like "the men having infirmity," whom the Law constituted priests, Jehovah's oath constitutes the Son, now lifted into perfected Manhood, for evermore.

4. Ib. ix. 11, 12.—Further, He is declared to have entered, as High-priest, into the Holiest "by means of the greater, and *more perfect* tabernacle, not made with hands; that is, not of this Creation." This is surely (cf. Mark xiv. 58) "the Temple of his Body."

In all these passages the perfection spoken of cannot be moral or official; but is surely the completion of manhood by the reunion of the body to the severed spirit, in a condition of being, which has death behind its back for evermore. Besides, if the phrase does not signify the Resurrection of Jesus, there is no mention of this in the didactic part of the Epistle; and it is unaccountably omitted in those connexions in which it would seem to be naturally called for; it is mentioned only in an allusive way, in the hortatory words at the end.[1]

But this word is not limited to the Lord: it is used concerning other men. It is emphatically charged (vii. 11, 19) against the Levitical priesthood and the whole ceremonial law, that they "*perfected* no one (*οὐδένα*)." "The gifts and the

[1] The Greek word used here, moreover, is not the ordinary word, "raised up," but the rather unusual verb, "brought up" (*ἀνάγω*);—the use of which is almost confined to Luke,—in his Gospel and in the Acts; yet which is once used by Paul (Rom. x. 7); in this sense. And yet, apparently, *there*, for a special reason,—the contrast with *κατάγω*, just before (a word also, else, peculiar to Luke):—"to *bring* Christ *down* . . to *bring up* Christ."

sacrifices offered (ix. 9) could not, consciously,[1] *make* the worshipper *perfect*. And so, yet again, with emphatic iteration (x. 1), "the law . . can never, with those sacrifices . . *make* the comers thereunto *perfect* to perpetuity. For then would they not have ceased to be offered? Since the worshipper would not any more have consciousness of guilt, having been cleansed once for all."

In all these passages the central thought is one and the same: that, until man is brought to stand in presence of the very Glory of God, with entire acceptance, without the least stain of sin, or cloud of sorrow (ii. 10), the Purpose of God has not been attained, and every instrumentality is but failure. Resurrection alone meets the need: and this Christ has effected. "For by one offering (x. 14), He *hath perfected* to perpetuity them who are sanctified":—the "co-quickened, co-raised, co-seated in the Super-heavenlies, in Christ Jesus" (Eph. ii. 5, 6).

Of that noble army of ancient saints, in chap. xi., "of whom the world was not worthy,"—not one has yet, *in propriâ personâ*, attained this privilege. They were God's heroes, by faith; they "all obtained a good report," that is, the

[1] Κατὰ συνείδησιν (according to consciousness). The worshipper's own consciousness would loudly proclaim that he was still only a mortal man, loaded with infirmities; and certainly not brought into the actual Presence of God, in immortal perfection of being.

Spirit's own testimony; they "were witnessed-unto," viz. in the Sacred Word. But "they have not received the promise" (the thing, the reality, promised); they wait for it; they are still disembodied, unclothed sleepers. Why? Because God (ver. 40) has provided a something better; the very best of all; the better resurrection (ver. 35); for *us*, the Church of "these last days." They may not have *their* inheritance of resurrection-perfection, till we have *ours*.

And so, in ch. xii. 22–24, among the distinctive glories of the "immovable kingdom," to which believers in Christ are come,—are included "*spirits* of righteous persons *perfected*." The whole vast aggregate,—"a multitude which no man can number,"—of once guilty sinners made the righteousness of God in Christ, "who have washed their robes, and made them white in the Blood of the Lamb";—now, at length, in the prophetic vision of faith, "changed into his image," "clothed-upon with their house which is from heaven," and "shining forth as the sun, in the Kingdom of their Father."[1]

The word in question is by no means of rare occurrence in the New Testament, but such an application of it is almost unexampled, except in

[1] I abstain from pressing Heb. v. 14; vi. 1; and xii. 2, into this category. The evidence is *ex abundantiâ*, without these. Yet, in the light of the passages expounded in the text, it might not be difficult to find the same fundamental thought in each of *them*.

this Epistle. Yet, on one single occasion, the Lord Himself did use the expression, in such a way that we can scarcely avoid associating with it the idea of his resurrection on the third day. In his stern message to the vile and crafty Herod (Luke xiii. 32), He says, "... and the third day I *am perfected*."[1]

On the whole, then, it appears that the Epistle to the Hebrews, in other respects so glorious to the Son of God, forms no exception to the universal testimony borne by the Apostolic Scriptures to the dominant importance of the Resurrection. Thither is our eager gaze directed, as with longing eyes we wait for the full enjoyment of "the Hope of the Promise made of God unto the Fathers" (Acts xiii. 32; xxvi. 6). We are sure that we shall have it: for "as concerning that [God] raised Him up from the dead, no more to return to corruption, He said on this wise, 'I will give you the SURE mercies of David.'" We are sure that we shall have it: for He Himself, who dieth no more, hath said (John xiv. 19), "Because I live, ye shall live also."

We wait for the Son from heaven, even Jesus, who hath delivered us from the wrath to come!

[1] Luke alone records this saying. If, as some have conjectured, Luke was the Spirit's Scribe to the Hebrews, this very phrase of the Lord may possibly have suggested the characteristic expression in the Epistle. Its occurrence, however, in 1 Cor. xiii. 10, and Eph. iv. 13, —in the writings of Paul,—may be compared.

VIII.

THE UNCLOTHED.

THAT was a grand note which was struck by the Apostle (2 Tim. i. 10); ". . our Saviour Jesus Christ, who hath abolished Death." Not *destroyed* him, yet; though this is secured;—but *nullified* him, made him powerless, so that a saint can triumph over him, in prospect, singing, "O Death! where is thy sting? O Grave! where is thy victory?" For Death, in the word of God, is always regarded as an enemy to be overcome; not as a friend to be welcomed.

There is a deep mystery in death. Not so much in the original infliction of death upon the race,—the wages of sin. This, though terrible, is not unintelligible. But the death of *believers*, now that Christ has "annulled him that had the power of death,"—this seems a great mystery. We might expect, from the resurrection of Jesus, that the believer should *now* die no more; that death should now have no more dominion over him also;—*no more;* not the slightest show of any; no more than it has over the risen Christ. But it is not so, as we too well know.

"We see not, yet, all things put under man." And though, in the glory and honour wherewith Jesus is crowned, we are made quite sure of absolute, sentient partnership with Him in the dominion over all;—though all the mercies covenanted to David are made "sure mercies," now that He is raised from the dead (Acts xiii. 34);—though we are co-quickened, revivified-together with Him;—yet *we* possess the life in instalments; *He* in full. Christ has the risen immortal life in spirit and body: we in spirit, but not yet in body.

Why this should be so, does not clearly appear. Why we, who have now the Spirit as firstfruit (ἀπαρχὴ), and earnest (ἀρραβὼν), should still be groaning and waiting for the redemption of our body, is a mystery. We are saved, indeed: but it is *in hope*; i.e. not in possession. We are hoping for that we see not; waiting for it in patient endurance (Rom. viii. 23–25).

It does not wholly lift the veil from this mystery, to say that the subjugation of all things to the Son upon the Father's throne (Psa. cx. 1) must be a process of ages. God can afford to work with majestic slowness; for He has Eternity in which to work. When we have become denizens of Eternity, the lapse of the centuries, which now appears so slow, will doubtless have ost that character, even to us:—

"And eternity seem as a day!"

Nor is it altogether lifted by recollecting that the Father's covenant with the Son was to "give Him the heathen for his inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for his possession" (Psa. ii. 8); to make Him "a light to the Gentiles; to be for Jehovah's salvation unto the ends of the earth" (Isa. li. 6). The gathering of the Church out of all lands, and from many generations, must, surely, occupy many successive courses of human life. Still, such succession needed not that a single believer should "fall on sleep" in bodily death; for it might have been ordained, for aught we can see, that each, in turn, when he had finished the work given him to do, should be rapt up in a changed and glorified body, without dying, as myriads will be at the last trump; and as Enoch and Elijah were long ago. We cannot lift this mystery: we can only say, "Even so, Father; for so it seems good in thy sight!" Meanwhile, we must be patient; stablish our hearts (James v. 8); counting the Coming of the Lord *nigh;* and seeking to realize the vivid force wherewith the Holy Ghost expresses that exceeding nearness, which yet has been protracted for eighteen centuries: "For yet a little while;—how little! O how little! (*Ἔτι μικρὸν ὅσον! ὅσον!*) the Coming One will come, and will not tarry" (Heb. x. 37).

The inspired Apostle (Rom. viii. 10, 11) notices the pressure of this mystery; and, without attempting to remove it, meets it in a very

remarkable manner. "If Christ be in you, the body indeed is dead [remains mortal], because of sin; but the spirit is life, because of righteousness. But if the Spirit of Him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, He that raised up [not *Jesus* only, but] the *Christ* from the dead will also revivify *your* mortal bodies, because of his Spirit dwelling in you." The key to the passage is this change of the name *Jesus* to *the Christ*. Jesus is the Blessed and Holy Man, personally: Christ is the composite Man, in resurrection-life; the Head of his Body, the Church, with his many members in indissoluble union. What is true of the Head must be true of the Members. And the indwelling Spirit, given to every believer, is repeatedly described (2 Cor. i. 22; v. 5; Eph. i. 13, 14; Rom. viii. 23) as the pledge, or earnest-money, which assures the full payment, ultimately, of the inheritance.

It is a very wonderful thing that is recorded of the Patriarchs (Heb. xi.),—that they all *died* in faith. Though each had received covenant engagements from Jehovah, that he himself, as well as his seed, should possess *the land*, he could calmly lie down on what he knew to be the bed of death, and give commandment concerning his bones; when he had not possessed one foot of it, save that burial-cave at Hebron, where the sacred dust still lies! Oh! this was mighty, far-seeing faith indeed! Not only did they "look

for *the* City that hath *the* foundations," which could be no other than the New Jerusalem; but they looked with undoubting confidence for the restitution of their *bodies*, in which to enjoy *the land*.

The Lord Jesus, before immortality had been brought-in by his own finished work, recognized the gloom of this mortal life, calling it "the Valley of the Shadow of Death" (Psa. xxiii. 4). For this phrase, surely, does not designate the article of dying, the death-bed,—as is often loosely assumed. It is the whole course, over which Death spreads his sable wing, bounding every view. The Son had come expressly to submit to death,—to go down into its darkness; and though He knew there was "the path of life" beyond, *that* had not been *shewn* Him yet. And though such was the trusting confidence in God of "the poor and needy Man," that He could say, "I will fear no evil,"—yet the brooding shadow of death over his path was not the less gloomy, as He walked through it.

On the conditions of the unclothed spirit Scripture is remarkably silent. How earnestly do we long to know the state of the loved one just snatched away by death! What are his thoughts, his feelings, his powers? Is he still cognizant of the scenes which he has left? Does he still see and hear *me*, though I cannot see or hear *him?* Is his life in continuity with the past? or separated by an impassable barrier?

Are his present at all like his late occupations? or quite different and novel? Does he retain his former mental faculties, undiminished by the lack of bodily aid? Has he acquired others, hitherto unimagined? To these and a thousand other anxious questions, a blank silence must be returned. For none has ever come back to report; and God, in his wisdom, has left us in darkness.

Yet the darkness is not absolutely total. From a few and brief allusions in the Sacred Word, some scattered gleams of light struggle to us, which we may collect, compare, and examine.

The Spartans are said to have placed the images of Sleep and Death side by side. "Sleep, twin-brother of Death." The Holy Spirit often calls death "sleep." The kings, especially of David's line, "slept with their fathers." Jesus said (John xi. 11), "Our friend Lazarus sleepeth, but I go that I may awake him out of sleep." Yet, that this was not an ordinary form of speech, appears from the disciples not understanding Him. Those who will be raised by the last trump (1 Thess. iv. 13–17; 1 Cor. xv. 51) are described as sleeping. Perhaps the analogy between sleep and the disembodied state may be closer than we are apt to think. Do we not, in nightly dreams, perform the common functions of life without bodily organs? We see without eyes, hear without ears, touch without hands, walk without feet, speak without mouths;—and

all in the most common-place, familiar, every-day style, and in the most perfect manner: so that, *while the somnolent state lasts*, we are conscious of no difference between it and waking. And the phenomena differ from those of imagined or remembered scenes awake, in that those are spontaneous and uncalled, whereas these are dependent on the will, however lazily exercised. The fragment of dream-life, too, is quite incommunicable to others, while the state lasts.

Does not this familiar phenomenon, when carefully weighed, remove much of the difficulty, often felt, of the activity of the unclothed spirit?[1]

The Lord's striking story of the Rich man and the Beggar (Luke xvi.) bears upon the question; —particularly, if we could be sure that He intended a simple narrative. It is usual to call it a *parable:* but this seems inconsistent with the curious fact that He tells the *name* of one of the actors. Characters in parables are not named. If He had merely said, "a certain beggar," we might well have supposed the description impersonal: but since He names him, "Lazarus" (i.e. the Greek form of the familiar Hebrew name Eliezer),—it is hard to avoid the conclusion that

[1] I do not mean to imply a *parallelism* between the disembodied condition and dreaming; but only so much analogy as is suggested by the familiar occurrence of (*quasi*) bodily functions carried on, seemingly in the most normal manner, without the slightest help from bodily organs.

it was a real case. Yet the imagery, the *dress*, may well be symbolic, or pictorial. Abraham's bosom; the finger; the tongue; the water; the flame; the gulf;—are these real? corporeal? or only subjective, in a mode somewhat, even if remotely, like the (*quasi*) reality of vivid dreams?

Not much of detail, concerning the condition of either the lost or the saved, can be deduced from this narrative;—apart, of course, from the great spiritual lesson. They were in sight of each other, though no inter-communication was possible; for though the rich man discoursed with Abraham, he had no converse with Lazarus. Note, too, that this was before the Lord's Resurrection: it was at his Ascension that He led captivity captive, and, according to popular (perhaps unfounded) belief, removed the Paradise, or compartment of righteous souls, the "Limbus of the Fathers," from Hades, to a higher, freer, happier region.

Abraham seems named, as he with whom the Covenant of Promise had been made; "the Father of all that believe" (Rom. iv. 11): and the reclining on his bosom, as the chief place at the Feast, over which Abraham is supposed to preside. We are taught (Matt. viii. 11) that "many shall . . sit down [recline] with Abraham . . in the kingdom of heaven": and the Lord (Lu. xiii. 28) says that the damned shall, with weeping and gnashing of teeth, *see this*.

It is observable that while the words used of the rich man,—"*tormented* in *flame*," and those just quoted of such as are thrust out,—imply intensity of actual suffering,—the word used of Lazarus, "*comforted*," and also the image of *reclining*, suggest a somewhat passive condition, rather than high intense enjoyment or triumph. And this seems borne out by the saying of Paul (Phil. i. 21–25); "to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain: . . having a desire to be released (*τὸ ἀναλῦσαι*), and to be with Christ, which is very far better." He was now in prison; his enemies, even in the Church, were wishing (ver. 16) to add affliction to his bonds: if he were set free, he carried his life in his hand (2 Cor. iv. 8–12); he died [was as a dying man] daily (1 Cor. xv. 31); if he lived, *this* was the fruit of his labour (Phil. i. 22); he could expect nothing better than this, *in the flesh*:—what wonder if he sometimes longed for the release, the rest, with Christ! Yet, when he speaks representatively, on behalf of the whole Church, he says, even when looking at the groaning, burdened condition (2 Cor. v. 4),—"not that we wish to be unclothed!" Seeing that every hour lived for Christ here, augments the reward and treasure in heaven; this latter must be considered the legitimate view, on the larger, wider, range. It is much better to be permitted to live here, if God give grace, than to be prematurely removed, even to Paradise. Else, for saints to

sleep (as in 1 Cor. xi. 30-32; 1 John v. 16) would not be judicial chastisement; but a *premium on disobedience.*

Of the separate spirit of our Lord, during the three days that his body was in the tomb, we have no certain information. The statement in the Creed, that "He descended into hell," is of no Scriptural authority. His reply to the penitent robber needs not imply his presence in Paradise on the day of his death. For the word "*to-day*" may date the "*I say,*" as well as the "*thou shalt be.*" And though this interpretation at first looks meagre and frivolous, it is not really so. The dying man asks to be *remembered,* when the Lord shall come to his kingdom, which might be "after a long time" (Matt. xxv. 19). He replies, in effect, "Thou needest not wait till then; I give thee the promise this very day."

Yet Paul's word,—"to be *with Christ,*" makes the ordinary reading the more probable.

The most full, and the most distinct view of the separate state of the Blessed, vouchsafed to us, appears to be that lovely picture of the Great Multitude in Rev. vii. 9-17. It is certain that these are believers; for they have robes washed in the blood of the Lamb (ver. 14). They are not a Jewish remnant; for they are out of all nations, kindreds, peoples, and tongues (ver. 9). They are not the completed church; for they are not *come* (as the Eng. Ver. has it) but *coming*

(οἱ ἐρχόμενοι;[1] in course of coming; "they who are in process of coming out"); it is the gradually accumulating Church, being gathered, one by one, out of "the Tribulation, the Great"; characteristic of a period beginning with the Roman siege of Jerusalem (cf. Matt. xxiv. 21, with Luke xxi. 26), and ending with the Advent of the Lord.[2] Yet it is not the Resurrection Glory: it is not the perfected bliss of the New Jerusalem of chap. xxi. *Here* they serve in God's temple (ver. 15); *in the Holy City* no temple was seen. *Here* they serve day and night; there shall be no night *there*. *These* have white robes of acquittal, and palms of victory; but they are not crowned yet. They *stand before* the Throne of God; but they are not *sitting on* the Throne with the Son, ruling and judging with Him. They are tenderly comforted; they hunger no more, neither thirst any more; the burning sun no more oppresses them; all tears are wiped from their eyes; God Himself dwells among them; and the Lamb leads them to living fountains. But they do not yet eat of the fruit of the Tree of Life: the Name of God is not yet emblazoned on their foreheads: they do not yet reign with Christ for ever and ever.

[1] A very important word is this present participle; and one that, *alone*, goes far to fix the period of this multitude.

[2] See my tractate, "The Great Tribulation" (Morgan & Chase).

It seems beyond doubt, then, that this sweet picture-vision must portray the present unclothed condition of the redeemed. And the fact is patent, that, delightful as is every feature depicted here, by his unerring hand who draws aside the veil,—the general tone is, as before, of *passive*, rather than *active*, enjoyment. We see the entire cessation, and total absence, of every form of pain, or suffering, or sorrow; the tenderest sympathies, the most loving consolations, of God and the Lamb; absolute rest from anxiety and labour:—but we hear no triumphant shouts of praise; we see no rapturous exultant joy. The very word "serve" (λατρεύω)[1] suggests the silent reverent attitude of those servants of Jehovah, in the Song of Degrees (Psa. cxxxiv.), "who by night stand in the House of Jehovah; and lift up their hands in the Sanctuary"; not the swift, burning ministry, excelling in strength, of those august angels, whose semblance in service is to winds, and to flames of fire.

We may indeed say, as we gaze into the quiet depths of the lovely scene, Surely it were good to be there! But it is not our ultimate hope: it is not the best that we are looking for. God has provided "some better thing" even than this: and we do with patience wait for it.

[1] Yet see xxii. 3.

IX.

RESURRECTION-LIFE.

Thus saith the Holy Ghost by Paul to the saints and faithful brethren in Christ who were at Colosse (Col. iii. 1–4) :—"If ye then have been co-raised with the Christ, seek the things which are above, where the Christ is, sitting on the right hand of God. Mind the things above, not those on the earth. For ye have died; and your life is hidden with the Christ in God. When the Christ, our life, shall be manifested, then shall ye also, with him, be manifested in glory."

Exception is sometimes taken to the term, "Resurrection-life." Granted that the *term* is not in Scripture,—yet is not the *thing* there? Is not the grand reality blessedly, gloriously resplendent in the Divine oracle quoted above? No doubt resurrection properly belongs to the body, and is limited to it; and no doubt the Holy Ghost attaches far more importance to the body of a believer than current theology does. But in 1 Corinthians xv. the *raised* body is distinguished from the *sown* body, by having, as its animating principle, πνεῦμα, *pneuma* (*spirit*), which it acquires from Christ,—Christ risen, of course,—

instead of ψυχὴ, *psyche* (*soul*), which had been inherited from Adam. Now we have not yet the pneumatic (spiritish) *body;* but we already have the pneumatic *life.* In the same Epistle (1 Cor. ii. 12) the Apostle says, "We have received . . . τὸ πνεῦμα τὸ ἐκ τοῦ Θεοῦ, *the spirit which is from God.*" And again, Paul opens Romans viii. by contrasting the law of Life *in* Christ Jesus, which he calls the Spirit's law, with the Flesh's law of Sin, and [therefore] of Death.

This, then; this present ingrafting of the believer into the raised Christ; this new Creation (2 Cor. v. 17),—is what we mean by Resurrection-life, or Life in Resurrection. The phrase is certainly convenient, and allowable, if not necessary. But to the Law, and to the Testimony.

Perhaps there is no important portion of the written Word that is so thoroughly misapprehended as the opening of Romans vi. It is almost uniformly read as a forcible dissuader against believers' continuing to practise sin; though, as I hope to show, there is not even a glance at such dissuasion, in the first eleven verses of the chapter. It is evident that the translators had caught scarcely a glimpse of the Apostle's meaning; and, in consequence, the passage is so disguised in the A.V., that it is not possible for the English reader to follow it. In the Rev. V. there is much and manifest improvement in the rendering; but I venture to think that the reasoning has not yet been perceived.

It is a close logical argument. Until we reach verse 12, there is not a word on walk, in the sense of Christian conduct, or behaviour. It is occupied, quite exclusively, with *status*;—the standing of the believer before God; his position as identified with that of the risen Christ. Not till this is irrefragably established does the Spirit allude to conduct; but then He proceeds to enforce this on the stable ground of guiltlessness, with his weighty "therefore," in verse 12, and onward.

The argument in the passage from verse 1 to 11 may be thus summarily presented. The penalty for sin is one death:—death (in full) once. Christ became identified, in guilt, with all God's elect. Christ died penally once. Therefore we died, representatively, once. Therefore the penalty is exhausted, for us, finally.

In order to clearly understand the passage, we must look back into the previous chapter, where the dense veil begins to be drawn over it, by two Greek terms, which were evidently intended to stand in contrast, having been unhappily rendered by one and the same English term, "*abound.*"

The Apostle, in chap. v., teaches that Adam's transgression involved all his progeny in guilt,[1]

[1] It is of the first importance to see that, in the whole passage, sin is spoken of, forensically, in the sense of *guilt:* that is, liability to punishment. In a judicial trial in a human criminal court, the point in question

the penalty of which is Death:—Adam having been constituted, in his creation, a vicarious or representative man. But the free grace of God, his unspeakable Gift, has *overspread* (ἐπερίσσευσε: v. 15). Christ became a representative man, too, "for the many," whom the Father had given him.

But since, when Law came in (20) with its myriad details, its result was that offences multiplied, *swarmed* (ἐπλεόνασεν), a difficulty seemed to arise. If the free gift of God availed to cancel the original Adamic guilt, how now that the offence is multiplied, millions of times, and by millions of persons? Will there not be requisite as many unnumbered millions of such free gifts of God? "Must we not remain under the guilt till grace shall *swarm* (πλεονάσε)?[1] till the repeated acts of grace shall outnumber the acts of offence?" (vi. 1.)

This is the question with which the argument begins. Let us distinctly apprehend it. It is not, at all, whether we shall still, as accepted believers, continue to feel inclinations to evil in our hearts. The question of the permanence, or the eradication, of indwelling sin, however im-

is not the moral turpitude of the prisoner, but whether he comes under the sentence of the law. If he does, he is pronounced "guilty"; and this liability to the law's stroke is technically "guilt." *Punishment* alone, under a perfect government, can remove *guilt*.

[1] Comp. with ver. 20, *supra*.

portant, is not discussed, not even *touched* here. There is no argument, in these verses, on this matter. But whether the penalty can be put away without God's free gift being required as many times as there are sinners, or transgressions. And what is the triumphant answer? That where the guilt *swarmed* (ἐπλεόνασε), the Grace (not swarmed,[1] but) *much more overspread* (ὑπερεπίσσευσεν) :—that Christ's *once* dying meets the Law's entire demand.

"What shall we say, then? Shall we remain in the guilt, that the Grace may swarm?[1] Far otherwise. How shall we, who died to guilt,[2]

[1] In the application to *grace* of the word "swarm," which before had been appropriated to "*offence*," replacing thereby the word "*overspread*," which had been used with it before,—lies one of the keys for unlocking the whole reasoning. By rendering the two Greek words, indiscriminately, *abound*, the meaning is utterly and hopelessly lost.

[2] "Who are dead to sin" is a most unhappy rendering. The Authorized Version has in very many places rendered the past tenses of the verb "to die," by the adjective "dead" with the verb-subst., as here. Yet, surely, "to have died," and "to be dead," are not the same thing, if resurrection is in view. Christ died; but is Christ dead? And this illustration is the more germane, since it is this very case, on which the inspired argument hinges.

Again,—"dead to sin" is constantly understood to signify, "having left off to practise it." But, in ver. 10, the identical word, in the identical tense, is said of Christ: "He died unto sin": yet to say that Christ left off to practise sin, would be abhorrent to any Christian.

live any more in it? Know ye not that all we, who were baptized into Jesus Christ, into his death were baptized? We were, then, co-buried[1] with Him through baptism into death; in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead through the Glory[2] of the Father, so also we might walk about in a new condition of life.[3] For since we became co-plants in the correspondence of his death, so also in that of his resurrection shall we be.[4] Knowing this, that the old man of us was co-crucified, in order that the body of the guilt[5] might be annulled, that we should no

Christ died to sin, in only one possible sense; viz. under its penal sentence. Yet the sense of the phrase must be the same in the two verses.

[1] See, for rendering *συν-*, in comp., by co-, note to page 68, *supra.*

[2] Perhaps the Glorification of the Father, in the atoning work of the Son. See John xvii. 4.

[3] This phrase, "walk in newness of life," has had much influence in promoting the acceptance of the ordinary exegesis of the passage. Yet the context, and specially the standard of comparison, "like as Christ," is ample to prove that not *walk*, in the sense of conduct, is in question, but *status:* not a new rule of living, but a new condition of life (cf. vii. 6); in which Christ himself now is, and walks.

[4] "Shall be." The future tense here presents no difficulty. The futurity is not futurity to the time when the Apostle wrote, but the logical futurity to the previous postulate;—"if we have been co-planted . . . we shall be . . ."; *i.e.*, it follows as a necessary sequence. It might have been rendered, "we *must* be."

[5] The "body of guilt" seems to be equivalent to the

longer be dominated by [lie under the penalty of] guilt. For one that has died [penally] has been justified from guilt.[1]

"Now, if we died together with Christ, we believe that we must also co-live with Him: knowing that Christ, having been raised from the dead, dies no more; death no more has sovereignty over Him: since, in that He died, for guilt He died once for all; but, in that He lives, He lives to God.[2] Just so, reckon ye also yourselves to be, on the one hand, dead corpses for guilt, and on the other hand, living to God in Christ Jesus."

In Philippians iii.7–14, the same divinely taught Apostle recounts his deliberate renunciation of pharisaic righteousness, for that righteousness which is by faith. The confidence that he once had in flesh, he has now no more; because he has learned that the flesh has been penally executed in Christ. This is generally appre-

"old man" under guilt; and refers to that "image of the earthy" (1 Cor. xv. 49), which, *in the Surety*, has been already executed, and shall be, *in experience*, when He appears.

[1] Viz., because he has exhausted the penalty. This sentence is in the nature of an axiom; and is indeed the master-key that opens the whole.

[2] That is, with a life which God recognizes as life:—the "newness of life." A condition of existence which is under sentence of death God does not call "life," but "death." See Rom. viii. 10, comp. with 11: and Eph. ii. 5.

hended by instructed Christians; yet the apostolic reasoning is again obscured by the incorrectness of the tenses used in the authorized translation.[1] The Apostle is not expressing his *present* aspirations ("that I *may* win," "that I *may* know"), save that in ver. 8 he affirms that his views are now stedfast,—but the motives and aspirations which had swayed him in a time long since past; when he was balancing what he had been trusting all his life before, against union with a risen Christ; seizing the latter, and throwing away, as vile and worthless, the former.

"But what things were gain to me, those I counted loss for the sake of the Christ. Yea, doubtless, and I do [still] count all things to be loss, because of the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord; for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung; in order that I might[2] win

[1] Not through defect of scholastic learning; but through imperfect apprehension of the glorious doctrine taught; the oneness of the believer with the risen Christ.

[2] Not "that I *may* win," as if Paul had not yet won Christ. He knew that this was an accomplished fact, thirty years before. Nor can it be said that it was a progressive work, and that he was aspiring to win Christ more and more. For there is no progression in the being vitally united to the risen Christ. This is effected at the moment a sinner believes with the heart, and can never be augmented. The apprehension of the fact, the enjoyment of it, the fruits of it, may grow indefinitely; but the Apostle is not speaking of this, but of the actual

Christ, and be found in Him, not having my own righteousness, which was of law, but that which was through faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith;—[the excellency] of the knowing[1] of Him, even the power of his resurrection,[2] and [my] partnership in his death-sufferings, I having been conformed [cast into the same mould] with the death of Him:—if by any means [by any sacrifice of previous confidence], I might come to the out-resurrection from among the dead (See Rev. xx. 5, 6). Not that I should immediately grasp it, or that I have been presently perfected:[3] but I press on, if I also may [ultimately] grasp that for which I was grasped by Christ Jesus. Brethren, I do not count myself to have grasped it yet; but [having in view] one thing, forgetting the things behind, and stretching forward to the things

winning: and this had long been an accomplished fact. Thus the difference between the tenses "may" and "might," here, is of cardinal importance.

[1] Here, again, the meaning, certainly, is not "that I may know." It is the infinitive of the verb in substantival sense, preceded by the article in the genitive, τοῦ γνῶναι evidently in grammatical apposition with τῆς γνώσεως, in ver. 8; the intervening words being a parenthesis. (See Winer, *N. T. Greek*, § xliv.)

[2] The *power* of Christ's resurrection is what it is able to effect; viz. in bringing every believer into the resurrection state with Him.

[3] Perfected: in the sense of having a deathless body united to the deathless spirit. (See Exposition VII. *supra*.)

before, I press toward the goal [or, along the prescribed line] for the prize of the upward calling of God in Christ Jesus" (Phil. iii. 7–14).

Paul's great object of hope was "the Resurrection of the Just"; "the First Resurrection." "Our citizenship," he presently adds, "is in the heavens, whence we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ, who will change our humbled body, to conform it with his glorious body."

In unison with all this is another Apostolic testimony (1 Pet. iii. 17—). The Spirit, dissuading Christians from evil doing, uses this remarkable argument. "Since Christ has once for all suffered [=*died;* all through the passage] for sins, that should be enough: a Christian should think it shame to suffer for his own evil: if he suffer, let it be for well-doing." Then he adduces the atoning efficacy of Christ's death; and cites Baptism, defining it *not* to represent the actual cleansing of the heart, but to be the answer or confession that the conscience has been made good, *Godward,* by the resurrection of Jesus Christ; a response to the Spirit's witness of guilt wholly put away in the expiatory sacrifice of Christ (Heb. x. 2). And he presently adds (iv. 1—), "Christ, then, having suffered in flesh instead of us, arm yourselves with this thought,[1] that one who has suffered in flesh [*i.e.,*

[1] This appears to be the meaning of ἔννοια, a *thought* or *reflection;* viz. what is then immediately expressed. If the apostle had meant "the same mind [that was in

has died] has been put-an-end-to, as regards sin; that he should not now spend his remaining time, in flesh, to human lusts, but to God's pleasure."

And thus Peter assumes as an axiom the very truth which Paul assumes (Rom. vi. 7);—that death once,—one dying,—meets every claim of justice; and puts the man who can stand beyond it into a new life, life on an absolutely new footing. And Peter immediately makes the same application of this truth, viz. as a motive for practical holiness (ver. 2), as Paul does (Rom. vi. 12–22).

If it be objected that to teach this status in a deathless life, here and now, is dangerous Antinomianism, and encourages the lusts of the flesh, Peter's and Paul's use of the truth to enforce holiness ought to be a sufficient answer. Still, it does require a certain clearness of spiritual vision to see that resurrection-life is never by the Spirit of God set before the believer to be attained by his holiness of walk, nor augmented in the slightest degree. And why? Because it is a thing achieved by Christ alone. Believers do indeed share with the risen Christ in the glorious and blessed standing; but no shadow of a share had we in the satisfaction of the broken Law, in the payment of that ten thousand talent debt, in that finished work, on

Christ]," in the sense of habitual judgment, would he not have said *φρόνημα*, or *νόημα*?

account of which "God raised him from the dead." This was his, alone, unaided.

"God hath raised us together with the Christ" (Eph. ii. 6); and He has done it completely; He has done it once for all; He will never take back his gift of Life in the risen Christ, when once it has been bestowed. It is an accomplished fact; it is *eternal* life: no failure in walk, no earthliness of affection, no poverty of apprehension, can ever alter it. God has other modes of dealing with careless, earthly saints; but "the gifts and calling of God are without repentance [on his part]."

Peter was as fully co-raised with Christ, was as truly co-seated in the Superheavenlies, when his blameworthy dissimulation (Gal. ii. 11–14) brought down the stern rebuke of Paul, as when the Holy Ghost filled him at Pentecost, or as when he wrote his two epistles. Yes; at that very instant he was a risen man: his pusillanimous fear of man, and lack of uprightness did not alter that fact, though they gave the lie to it.

X.

REWARD ACCORDING TO WORKS.

How common is the sentiment, even from the pulpit, None can be sure of heaven till death! For any Christian to take the ground of certainty here, is deemed unwarrantable presumption, blameable, pitiable, perilous. And if he venture to shelter himself behind the inspired Word, and quote the text, "We know that we have passed from death unto life" (1 John iii. 14),—he is probably met by the rebuff, "An Apostle might take so high a ground; but you and I are not apostles. And even so holy an apostle as Paul habitually lived in fear of being lost, since he says, 'Lest, when I have preached to others, I myself should be a *castaway!*'" And this is often supposed to be unanswerable.

Yet the solemn affirmation of our Lord Jesus, introduced and confirmed by his twofold Amen (John v. 24), might surely decide the momentous question. "Amen, Amen, I say unto you, he that heareth my word, and believeth on Him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into judgment; but is passed out of death into life."

Such an one shall not come into *judgment;* for the word is not *κατάκρισιν,* but *κρίσιν*; he shall not even be arraigned in court for trial. The Lord uses the very form of words which his Apostle adopts in the statement just cited: "he has passed out of death into life":—has crossed the boundary which divides these two great kingdoms; has been, to use another sacred phrase (Col. i. 13), "translated out of the authority of the darkness, into the kingdom of God's dear Son." This passing out of death into life is the very reason why the believer shall not come into judgment; for this was the very issue to be tried, viz. whether this sinner was to die or live: and Jesus affirms that it has already been decided, concerning every one that heareth and believeth.

In truth the believing sinner has already been judged, condemned, sentenced, executed,—in the Person of his Surety; and, since it was lately shown that dying *once* exhausts the penalty, the believer takes his stand in a new condition of life.

The same immunity from even coming into the judgment-court is pledged again in the following pregnant words:—"As it is appointed to men to die, and after that judgment, *once,* so the Christ was offered (=died), to bear the sins of many (=was judged), *once:* and by them that are looking for Him, shall He be seen a second time, without [any recognition of] sin."

Often as these words—at least those of the opening clause—are chosen as the "text" of "funeral sermons," how seldom is the key-note caught! How seldom is it seen that the force of the passage lies in the word *once!* Having finished transgression, and made an end of sins, and made reconciliation for iniquity, on behalf of all the "many sons," He will not, at his second Advent, even bring them into Court, to be tried for their life, on the question of guilt.

Will it, then, really make no difference to the believer, whether he walk after the flesh, or after the Spirit? Satan, whose mastery in temptation could use against the Son even the Spirit's testimony (Matt. iv. 6), can reason plausibly in diverse directions. If he use Scriptural warnings against fleshly lusts, so as to induce doubt of the richness of God's grace and the amplitude of Christ's work, on the one hand, he can, on the other, and does, use the assured security of the believer to induce carelessness and presumption. "I am sure I am a believer: I have certainly fled for refuge to Jesus. Therefore I may indulge a little in the pleasures of sin; as it can evidently make no ultimate difference."

Is it so indeed? Has the Allwise God been so incautious as to expose the riches of his grace to my abuse, without any countercheck? He is described (Eph. i. 8) as "abounding therein in all wisdom and prudence"; and that, expressly, in making known the resurrection to, and session

in, the Superheavenlies, of all believers in the Christ. "In prudence"! Where is the prudence of God manifested?

The Lord Jesus affirms of the believer, "Into the judgment he shall not come." His apostle (2 Cor. v. 10) says "We must all appear before the judgment-seat of Christ." Is there not contradiction here? It seems so at first sight, and that irreconcileable.

We reconcile by distinguishing. The Lord, in John v., was alluding to a *criminal* court; a great Assize court, wherein are tried issues of life and death. Every one arraigned before that bar, is tried for his life. Into that court no believer can ever come; for the issue has been settled already. But Paul speaks of another and very different court, in which far other issues will be tried; life or death will not be mooted at all, but reward for work done. It will not be an Assize, but a Family Investigation; not a criminal, but a civil court.

Life, salvation, is all of grace; not of works (Eph. ii. 8, 9): but, to the saved, the living, the many sons, there are various spheres of service opened, and rewards proffered, expressly for works to be done; and this reward according to works is commonly spoken of by the term μισθὸς; which strictly signifies *wages, pay*. "Every one that plants or waters in the Lord's field (1 Cor. iii. 8) shall receive his own reward (wages), according to his own labour." "If I preach the

gospel willingly," says Paul (1 Cor. ix. 17), "I have reward [wages]."

The foundation of this salutary doctrine, which vindicates the prudence of God, was broadly laid by our Lord himself. That manifestation of his majesty (2 Pet. i. 16), the Transfiguration (Matt. xvii. etc.), was vouchsafed to some of his disciples, immediately subsequent to and confirmatory of, solemn assurances of this investigation. "For the Son of Man shall come in the glory of his Father, with his angels; and then He will reward each one according to his works (xvi. 27)." But, especially, and with much detail, in the two important parables, of the Talents (Matt. xxv. 14–30), and of the Pounds (Luke xix. 12–27). We are distinctly taught that this examination will be held at the Lord's Second Advent; probably immediately after the Rapture of the raised and changed Saints (1 Thess. iv. 17); when He will be revealed with his mighty angels (2 Thess. i. 7). He comes after *long* absence, in a *far* country, when He *has received* his kingdom. The servants, who had been left to occupy, intrusted with various "talents,"—time, faculties, powers, opportunities, health, money, education, the Word, the Spirit, Church-fellowship, ten thousand differing trusts,—have every one to be carefully, unerringly, though lovingly, examined, on every act, word, thought of their course here, by Him who has overlooked nothing, who has omitted nothing, who has

forgotten nothing, who makes no mistakes, who has seen in secret, to whose eyes all things have been naked and opened;—and all under one controlling aspect, loyalty, in everything, to Jesus.

We need not suppose that any long period will be occupied with the adjudication. The Lord will already have formed his own infallible judgment of every case, from which there will be no appeal: and though millions on millions of experiences, no two alike, will be judged, yet, since the individuals will all be in perfected bodies, the results may possibly be communicated to, and apprehended by, each one, and all collectively, as well as to the hosts of surrounding and witnessing angels, with a rapidity and a clearness of which a flash of lightning is but a very feeble image.

What will be the nature of the rewards we cannot tell. In the parables it is presented under the guise of rule, authority. This, however, may be no more than the pictorial harmony and propriety of the scene depicted, of which all our Lord's parables afford exquisitely perfect examples. Each of these (more distinctly that of the Pounds) supposes the Judge to be a King, recently come to his Throne, exercising dominion himself and apportioning it to his proved loyal servants. And this prospect of kingly rule, to be shared with Him, we find, in many other passages, set before working and suffering saints, for encouragement of persevering faithfulness.

Perhaps it would not be possible to make any diagnosis of the distributed rewards, that would be intelligible to our present imperfect faculties. "It doth not yet appear what we shall be."

Yet, in the parable of the Talents, there is a note struck, not heard elsewhere, which cannot fail to awake an echo in every loving heart. The Lord, having expressed approval and praise of the good and faithful servant, and having assigned to him his grant of dominion,—adds a tenderer word: "Enter thou into the joy of thy Lord!" It is not merely that he is to enter into joy, however intense and unmingled it may be, but "the joy of *thy Lord*." It will be the personal and proper joy of the Lord Jesus, his own joy, that the approved servant is to share. Oh what will that be! In the grand doxology with which Jude ends his Epistle, our Saviour God is exhibited as about "to present us faultless before the presence of his glory, with exceeding joy";—the joy, for which, when it was set before Him, "He endured the cross, despising the shame" (Heb. xii. 2). Well may Paul say, looking to this very judgment-seat, "We are ambitious, that . . . we may be well-pleasing to Him" (2 Cor. v. 9).

But who stand to be judged in this august court? Some say, All mankind; calling it "the general judgment";—a phrase which does not occur in Scripture, and which does not seem to express any revealed fact. In the parables they

are said to be,—in Luke, the Lord's servants, *his own* (ἑαυτοῦ); in Matthew, still more emphatically, *his proper*, peculiar (ἰδίους) *servants*. Paul (2 Cor. v. 10) says, indeed, "we must all appear"; and this might seem to mean, *all of mankind*. But a little examination of the context will convince us that he is speaking only of saints; indeed, only of *serving*, ministering, saints, directly. For his theme is the Christian ministry: the grandeur of the Gospel message, and the weakness of those who carry it; likened to the feeble band of Gideon (Judg. vii.) against the countless host of Midian; bearing light, indeed, but in clay pitchers, "earthen vessels," which must be *broken*, too, before the light can shine. Then he vividly describes the brokenness of the pitcher;—himself going daily through the tumultuous streets of some heathen city, carrying his frail life in his hand, not knowing the moment he may be struck down and slain. Yet, should it come to this extremity, the pitcher be utterly smashed, the tabernacle dissolved, he is not without resource, for he waits the risen body, the eternal house; and, meanwhile, he will be present with the Lord. This, then, being his confidence, his ambition is to be pleasing to the Lord. "For we must all be manifested before the judgment-seat of the Christ, in order that each may receive, by means of the body, the [things] according to what he has done, whether good or bad."

So here it is wholly a question of work done,

not of life; and the "we" are evidently those who are expected to please the Lord. But He asks no service, accepts none, from any who has not first accepted Him as Saviour: the works of such are, *ipso facto*, "dead works," being the works of the dead; and must, of necessity, be damning (Rev. xx. 13).

Those who are then judged receive their reward *by means of the body*:[1] and this must be the raised, immortal body; for the Lord will have come, having received his kingdom (Luke xix. 15); and the [raised] dead, as well as the [changed] quick (2 Tim. iv. 1), are included. These, then, must be saints; for none others[2]

[1] The supply of the participle "done," before the words "through the body" is needless; since "receive" is a quite sufficient governing verb. The rendering above is better sense, as well as better grammar.

[2] Transparent truth is essential in expounding the Word of God, even though it may seem to damage the integrity of a conclusion. The slothful servant, and producer of worthless work (Luke xix. 26; 1 Cor. iii. 15) suffer loss; but in Matt. xxv. 30 he is cast into "the darkness which is outside, where is weeping and gnashing of teeth." Now these last conditions (in xxiv. 49) characterize the "hypocrite," who is "cut asunder": —while, in the parables of the Tares and the Net (xiii. 42, 50), they characterize the children of the Wicked One in the furnace of fire! Yet the position of the "wicked servant," and his doom, in the parable of the Pounds, seem quite distinct from the position and doom of the King's enemies, the citizens who hated Him. I cannot remove this difficulty.

Again, though it seems the general teaching of the

will have part in the First Resurrection. And in the parallel passage of 1 Corinthians iii., he who suffers loss in the award is distinctly stated to be "*saved.*"

It is implied, however, in both, that there will be some pain inflicted. To "receive according to the bad" (*κακόν*); to "suffer loss," or damage (*ζημιωθήσεται*); to be saved "as through a fire"; —do not these terms necessarily involve some mortification or pain, either of spirit or body? Loose theology assumes that there can be no sorrow to the redeemed, after this life; but I am not aware of any Scripture which teaches this;[1] and the statements before us are very solemnly clear, on the other side.

The passage in 1 Corinthians iii. and iv. relates specifically, yet not solely, to ministers of the Word. It is a salutary reminder that the work accomplished has to be judged. Partisanship,

Word, that *saints alone* will be raised at the Second Advent; that those are blessed and holy who have part in the First Resurrection; and that "the rest of the dead" live not till after a thousand years;—though this seems clear, yet the Lord said to Caiaphas, and his co-assessors, "*Ye shall see* the Son of Man sitting at the right hand of Power, and *coming* in the clouds of heaven" (Matt. xxvi. 64). Will the vile high-priest, then, be raised from the dead at the Advent of Christ? Or, will he see it with his disembodied sense, from the torments of Hades?

[1] Rev. xxi. 4 is *certainly*, vii. 17 is *probably*, future to this Bema of Christ.

jealousy, self-seeking in any form, will be but stubble for the fire, before the face of Christ. What that fire will be we know not: it is not alluded to elsewhere. The threat in Malachi iv. 1, (with a certain verbal resemblance) seems to have a widely different application. The "purgatory," which Romish teaching assigns to the disembodied state, has no support from hence: for this scrutiny of work is not till the "Day" of God (iii. 13; iv. 3, 5). For the same reason, the Fire cannot mean God's fatherly chastenings on erring saints in this life. These indeed are corrective; and may, in certain cases, and in a certain aspect, be even punitive (1 Cor. xi. 30–32; 1 John v. 16); sin in believers may be visited with bodily suffering, and even with bodily death. But *this* fiery investigation is future both to the present life, and also to the unclothed state after death. Not only is the trial relegated to what is emphatically called "the Day," (iii. 13); but, in the summing-up of the whole warning, the Spirit distinctly refuses to "Man's Day" any decisive judgment (iv. 4), "until the Lord come, who will both bring to light the hidden things of darkness, and make manifest the counsels of the hearts. Then shall each have [his] praise from God."

Not *all* ministry of the word in the Church of God; not *all* preaching of the Gospel to the world; not *all* activity, or zeal, or organization; not *all* work done for the name of Jesus (Matt.

vii. 22, 23); no, not *all* done even by his own saints, even on Himself as the only Foundation, will stand his scrutiny there. We often hear,—"Such an one preaches a clear gospel!"—as if that covered everything: while, possibly, he may be overlaying it, in his practice and in his teaching, with multitudes of things which the Lord counts mere rubbish, stubble. Yet he may be very active, very energetic, very devoted. Will it cause no regret, no pang of sorrow, to such a labourer, to see so much of his cherished work burned up? While another, not a whit more active or earnest than he, but more deferent to his Lord's revealed will, and more obedient, —sees *his* work accounted "gold, silver, gems," and hears, with thrilling joy, the Master's word, "Well done!"

XI.

DAVID'S MIGHTY MEN.

GOD's Revelation is One. And, since the central Subject of the Revelation is Christ, and the Purpose of the Father concerning Him (Eph. i. 10),—so we might expect to find the Christ pervading the Old Testament; not only here and there, but everywhere: often patent and prominent; but often recondite, discernible only by the exercised eye; exercised specially in that reverent love for the Blessed Son, which feels a thrill of delight whenever his features are distinguished.

That the whole elaborate system of the Mosaic Economy;—its erections and furniture, its officers, its sacrifices, its rites,—constituted a vast aggregate of symbols that had their meeting-point in Christ, is a fact, with which, being commonly inculcated, Christians are tolerably familiar. And we are, habitually, not surprised that it should be so, in matters which God expressly appointed, and which would not have existed, but for his command. But what are known as the historical types of Scripture,—

living persons, free to act as they willed, yet so acting as to be indubitable reflections of the Great Coming One, sometimes in very complex series of incidents, running through many years, — these elicit our awed astonishment, which ever grows, the more deeply we consider them. But the Holy Ghost, in portraying such persons and histories, has not paraded their typical relations. No specific notes in the narrative mark when any incident has such a bearing; and, in the New Testament, only here and there are we definitely instructed in such relations between shadow and substance. We are left to search for the hidden treasure, and to dig it out when found, under the collateral light afforded by such infallible hints. Thus there is great need of sobriety, that we mistake not the play of fancy for God's revealing. Yet, on the other hand, there is a spirit even more to be deprecated, in reading the Divine Word, even that icy coldness which can discern nothing but the mere letter; and which has no welcome for it when it is pointed out.

Probably the catalogue of "the Mighty Men whom David had," preserved to us by the Spirit twice over, with slight variations, in 2 Samuel xxiii. and in 1 Chronicles xi., may seem, to many readers, peculiarly barren of instruction for Christians of the nineteenth century. A list of outlandish names, uncouth to look at, and difficult to pronounce, of most of which we are told

nothing elsewhere, told absolutely nothing, but that they are in this Record!

Are there any lessons to be learned here? Yes, surely: monitions of high value are enshrined in this catalogue of strange names: precious cheer, sweet encouragement, to the toiling, struggling, wrestling child of God. For here is a shadow-sketch, drawn by the Spirit's pencil beforehand, in typical outline, of that Judgment-seat of Christ, which we lately considered, where the Lord as King will take account of his servants, and reward each according to his deeds. "Then shall each have [his measure of] praise from God" (1 Cor. iv. 5).

Where is this Record inserted in the sacred story? In that account which most strictly follows historic sequence (2 Sam. xxiii.), it is just between the histories of David and Solomon. This is significant: for the Davidic and the Solomonic reigns represent but two phases of the one kingdom of heaven centreing in Christ.

The lowliness and the greatness; the meekness and the grandeur; the sorrows and the triumphs; of David, had been detailed by the inspiring Spirit in the two Books of Samuel, with a minuteness of detail, that indicated the complacency which the Divine narrator had in the portrait He was drawing, and the interest it would possess for the Church of God. Conjoined with his fortunes are dimly seen those of a few faithful ones, "whose hearts God had touched"; who clave

to him through his rejection;—few and feeble at first, but gradually swelling to a multitude.

David, during this period, is the ample type of our Lord Jesus, from the time when He came forth from the Father, to the Second Advent. In his meek obscurity (1 Sam. xvi.); his victory over the haughty adversary (xvii.); his oppression by the power of this world (xix.—); his place "outside the camp" in the cave, to which his followers resort, where king, priest and prophet are (xxii. 1, 5, 20); his wounds in the house of his friends (2 Sam. xv., xvii.) his subduings of the people and the Gentiles (ii., v., viii.);—in all these progressive stages we discern Jesus setting up the kingdom of God, winning his Church to himself, and steadily advancing towards that "End, when He shall have brought back dominion to God, even the Father."

On the other hand, the reign of Solomon presents a later phase of the Kingdom of God. The name Solomon (*Peaceful*), indicates a dominion of unbroken peace. David had shed much blood, and had made great wars (1 Chron. xxii. 8–10); needful, indeed, for the subjugation of inveterate foes; but introducing a reign of peace, in which there was to be "neither adversary nor evil occurrent" (1 Kings v. 4). This is, in type, the Millennial and Everlasting Kingdom, in which the faithful and approved will reign with Christ (Luke xxii. 28).

So, directly following "the Last Words of

David," in which he anticipates the "Morning without Clouds," and the simultaneous "burning of the sons of Belial in the fire,"—we see a grand Court, in which long past deeds are reviewed, and "found unto praise and honour, and glory" (1 Pet. i. 7).

The deeds which are here brought out for special honour had been done long before; and, in many cases, doubtless, had been long forgotten by contemporaries. But they had been done in express recognition, and for the sake, of David; and *he* had not forgotten. They had been done during his rejection as King; while he was king in the purpose and revealed will of God; but while Saul, the apostate, was king in possession, commanding the suffrages of the majority. Satan has been for ages, and still is, "god of this world" (2 Cor. iv. 4); carrying the whole world lying in his lap, to use the awful simile of the Apostle (1 John v. 19), like a satisfied sleeping child: and "the tares are the children of the wicked one" (Matt. xiii. 38). But "through honour and dishonour; through evil report and good report; . . . as unknown and yet well-known; as sorrowful, yet alway rejoicing";—a faithful few have cast-in their lot with Jesus; owning Him king; hoping in Him, in spite of all.

Saul's taunt to his servants when David was in the cave,—how plausible it was! "Hear now, ye Benjamites! will the son of Jesse give every one of you fields and vineyards; and make you

all captains of thousands and captains of hundreds?" How absurd, how impossible seemed the supposition! He was in hiding, an outlaw; fleeing for his own life. What could he give? or do? Yet there were a few so unreasonable as to dare to believe that honours and rewards would yet be his to bestow. And this they dared because they believed God: they rested on the word of Him that could not lie. David was God's anointed King to them: Jesus is God's anointed King to us.

It is characteristic of these heroic acts that they were modelled upon David's own. Perhaps unconsciously they had gazed on his heroism, till he had become their very pattern and specimen of what a warrior should be. Their hearts warmed to him; and as they conversed together over their camp-fires in the night-watches, recounting one and another of his glorious deeds, they burned with a noble ambition to do the like. See that son of Dodo the Ahohite, who "arose and smote the Philistines till his hand clave unto the sword; and Jehovah wrought a great victory that day; and the people returned after him only to spoil." How like all this is,—the valour, the victory, and the sequence,—to what is told of David, and the people, in xvii. 53! So the daring bravery of Shammah the Ararite was like to David's conquest of Goliath, in that it was single-handed. So Benaiah's slaying of the lion: David had done the like, while yet a youth ruddy

of cheek, and fair of countenance (xvii. 34–37). The same Benaiah's slaying of the two lion-like men ("lions of God") of Moab, apparently confederate; and, still more, his defeat of the Egyptian giant, to the slaying him with his own spear, himself being without weapon of war;—how exactly was this imitative of the Stripling!

Thus Jesus is our Example. Our best and noblest deeds are all the better and the nobler, the more nearly they resemble his. After that glorious roll of illustrious dead in Hebrews xi., and of their triumphs of faith, Jesus is held up to our gaze (xii. 2), as the Arch-leader or Captain of faith (τῆς πίστεως Ἀρχηγὸς), the One who took the very front place in the faithful ranks, and who carried it to resurrection-perfection (τελειωτὴς). "The weapons of our warfare are not carnal; but mighty in God, to the pulling-down of strongholds" (2 Cor. x. 4). How shall we wield them aright, but by gazing upon Him? Thus we are changed into the same image: we become "imitators of the servants and of their Lord" (1 Thess. i. 6).

How beautiful was that deed of self-denying love performed by "three of the thirty chief," who had come to David unto the Cave of Adullam:—a deep ravine in the dry rocky region bordering the Dead Sea! The Philistine host was encamped in the Plain of Rephaim, that stretches from Bethlehem to the Valley of Hinnom, near Jerusalem;—their outpost occupying the

town of Bethlehem itself, some six miles north of David's hiding-place. It is harvest time: the heat of that scorched region is scarcely less than tropical; the sun's rays reflected from the rocks are hardly bearable; water is rare and bad. David, parched with thirst, recals the clear cold water of the deep well in his own native town. "And David longed, and said, 'Oh that one would give me drink of the water of the Well of Bethlehem, which is by the gate!'—And the three Mighty Men brake through the host of the Philistines, and drew water out of the Well of Bethlehem, that was by the gate, and took it, and brought it to David. Nevertheless, he would not drink thereof, but poured it out unto Jehovah."

Such is the simple unadorned sacred story! But what an act it was! No orders had been issued by David; no obligation lay on any. None said, grudgingly, as we so often hear now, "It is not required of us!" But love to their lord was strong in those three loyal hearts. They were kindred spirits; they knew each other. They counted not their lives dear to them, if they could give joy to David. Nothing could withstand the whirlwind power of their burning love. They wrought their peerless deed. It was but a cup of cold water, after all: but so precious was it in David's eyes, that he counted not himself worthy of it: it was a drink-offering worthy of Jehovah.

Ah! in that coming Day foreshadowed here, when Jesus makes-up his jewels (Mal. iii. 17), there will be not a few such cups of cold water, which He will count given to Him in his need, each of which shall, *in no wise*, lose its reward (Matt. x. 42; Mark ix. 41).

These three devoted men seem to have wrought their loving service very quietly and unostentatiously. There was little asking for help or sympathy. They knew each other; said little; but girded-on their weapons:—and came to David's feet with the result.

If we look carefully through this catalogue of Worthies, how few we find of whom anything is known! The greater number are names utterly obscure, utterly unknown to fame, save for the mention here. Elhanan, the son of Dodo; Shammah the Harodite; Elika the Harodite; Helez the Paltite;—who were these? What did each achieve? Who knows? the history of their time makes no other allusion to them than this final one. Enough: they were known to David; loving, and loyal, and mighty, they had been in his service; and their names were not overlooked in the day of "recompense of reward."

So, of our Lord's precious jewels, how few in every age have been known to the Church at large! fewer still known, or held in any honour, by the world without. Of those enumerated in Hebrews xi., the Holy Ghost, in a brief but most eloquent parenthesis, says, "—of whom the

world was not worthy!" Their Lord will have many glorious things to tell, that elicited no *éclat* down here when performed. Many a poor, unknown cripple, many a bed-ridden paralytic, will shine out brightly then, as having wrought mighty deeds for Jesus, as having borne themselves valiantly in fight, and overcome the roaring lion, in their Master's strength and name.

There are honoured names here of foreigners; Gentiles, who were not by birth of the chosen seed of Israel. Here is a stranger from Zobah;—a Syrian; perhaps a captive taken in one of the early northern wars (2 Sam. viii.); brought to believe in Israel's God through David's precept and example. Here is an Ammonite; of whom it had been ordained, that they should not come into the congregation to their tenth generation. And here is a Hittite—over whose wrongs we will sadly draw a veil.

In the hastening Day "many shall come from the east and west, and shall sit down with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, in the kingdom of heaven." The "Great Multitude" is coming out of every nation: are they represented by these aliens? Chinese, Negroes, Caffirs, South-sea Islanders, Papuans,—it may be that from all these there will be some whom the King delighteth to honour.

But perhaps the most solemn thought that occurs, as we look down this lustrous list, is, that some whom we might have expected cer-

tainly to find, are missing. Joab,—how necessary he appears to have been to David! his near kinsman; early made captain of his host; connected so nearly with all his victories and conquests; so active, energetic, ubiquitous:—Joab is not here! That the omission is not accidental, is shown by the fact that his *name* occurs, repeatedly, but only indirectly. We hear of Abishai the brother of Joab; and of Asahel, the brother of Joab; and of Nahari, armour-bearer to Joab:—but where is Joab himself? He grew haughty, and proud, and overbearing; and fell at last. David himself had been obliged to denounce on him the guilt of murder (2 Sam. iii. 29, 39); and to complain, "these sons of Zeruiah be too hard for me."

Then Ahithophel, once David's counsellor and friend, of whom he says, "We took sweet counsel together, and walked unto the house of God in company." We have, indeed, Eliam, the son of Ahithophel, the Gilonite: but where is the Gilonite himself? Ah! he turned traitor in the day of temptation; he turned to what he thought the rising sun, and forsook the cause of David. Thus he became the very type and forecast, in hateful character and in cursed doom, of the son of Perdition.

And there is yet another blank. We involuntarily shrink from adverting to the very painful fact; but it is surely significant that Jonathan is not here! It may be objected that Jonathan had

been long dead; and therefore could have no place here. But so had Asahel, slain at about the same time as Jonathan; yet Asahel's name is enshrined in the glorious Record, while Jonathan's is wanting. That his love for David was great, nay wonderful—David himself has testified. That he recognized David's call to the kingdom, and his own place of subordination to him, his own words declared (1 Sam. xxiii. 17) :—*but he never took this place.* Natural affection prevailed over the known will of God (Matt. x. 37); and the loving and lovely Jonathan stands as the representative of many very sweet Christians, who cleave to that which has become effete and apostate, even though they have discerned its character in God's judgment. They have not courage to obey the solemn voice which thrills in their ears, "Be not unequally yoked together with unbelievers: for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness? and what concord hath Christ with Belial? or what part hath a believer with an unbeliever? . . . Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord" (2 Cor. vi. 14–16).

XII.

CROWNS.

The renowned athletic contests of Greece, in which men strove for masteries,—are too well known to need any detailed description. The Apostle to the Gentiles, guided by the inspiring Spirit, has made frequent allusion to them, in illustration of the duty, opportunity, temptation, encouragement, and prospect, of believers. And chiefly the foot-races,—contending runners in the stadium,—are thus used by him. If his visit to Corinth included, as is supposed, one of the famed Isthmian Festivals, it is natural that, in writing to the Church in that city, he would graphically allude to the circumstances, once so absorbing to his readers, and so well suited to add point to his exhortations. "The *herald*, who summons the contending runners; the *course*, which rapidly diminishes in front of them, as their footsteps advance to the *goal;* the *judge*, who holds out the *prize* at the end of the course; the *prize* itself, a chaplet of fading leaves; . . . the *joy* and *exultation* of the victor," [1] when the crown is gained:—all these are vividly presented.

[1] Conybeare and Howson; Chap. xx.

Paul himself was a runner:—in the race, of which the *course* was this present life; the *prize*, an incorruptible crown; the *judge*, the Lord Jesus Christ (1 Cor. ix. 24–27). And he describes the earnestness with which he kept the crown in view; the temperate control, in which he held his body; and the steady zeal with which he pressed onward (Phil. iii.), straining every nerve, that he might not be, at last, *disapproved* (ἀδόκιμος).[1]

The Judge himself is a crowned Victor. Once He wore a crown of thorns, in shame and suffering, in cruel mockery of his righteous claim. Now, "we see Jesus . . . crowned with glory and honour" (Heb. ii. 9), for having borne that very suffering and shame. In a scene yet future (Rev. xix. 12), He appears again,—"and on his head many *crowns*." But these are *diadems*, emblems of sovereignty.[2] Whether diadems will ever be on our heads, we are not told, in express words: but He "hath made us Kings and Priests unto God" (Rev. i. 6; v. 10); and we "shall reign with Christ a thousand years" (xx. 6); nay, "for ever and ever" (xxii. 5); judging angels; judging the world (1 Cor. vi. 2, 3); and ruling the nations (Rev. ii. 27), conjointly with Him.

[1] This is the word that is so unhappily rendered "a castaway" in A.V.; and so often misunderstood to mean *finally lost*. But the Athlete, though he might miss the crown of honour, ran no risk of losing his life.

[2] See Trench, "Synon. of N.T.," p. 89.

But the crown of honour, the στέφανος, or chaplet of reward, to be earned by diligent persevering striving, and that according to rules prescribed (2 Tim. ii. 5),—this is often mentioned as a stimulus to the saint, who already knows his acceptance in Christ. The apostles Paul, Peter, James, and John,—all make mention of the crown; but with distinctive marks, which seem to imply that, as different wreaths,—of laurel, of olive, of parsley, of pine, of flowers,—were the meed of success in different forms of contention, so our Lord will bestow varying expressions of his approval on his Overcomers; various honorary Crowns.

The conditional promises which He "who walketh in the midst of the Candlesticks," makes to his struggling servants, occupying during his absence in the "far country," are quite diverse to each church, or phase of the church. And these are by Himself associated with the proffered crowns: so that, in considering the one class of stimulants, we cannot well avoid the other: while the award of all points to that great tribunal, "the *Bema* of Christ," at which He will reward his servants, "according to their works."

The Crowns discriminated are four; viz. the Crown of Life; the Crown of Rejoicing; the Crown of Glory; and the Crown of Righteousness. Around these, as well as around the distinctive rewards held up to the Churches, great obscurity necessarily hangs; doubtless because

the sphere of being in which the awards will be made, though familiar to Him, is beyond our present cognizance.

1. The Crown of Life.—In James i. 12, we read, "Blessed is the man that endureth temptation; for, having become approved (δόκιμος; see 1 Cor. ix. 27), he shall receive the Crown of Life, which the Lord hath promised to them that love Him." And to the Church in Smyrna (Rev. ii. 10), the Lord says, "Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee *the* Crown of Life." The promise supposes tribulation, trial; it is to the patient endurance of this for Christ's sake, even to the laying-down of the mortal life, if necessary, the dissolution of the tabernacle (2 Cor. v. 1),—that this specific honour is given. Eternal life is the common boon of all believers (as already shown), who by believing, "pass out of death into life." But there must be something peculiar, something additional, in these Life-Crowns; or they would not be distinctive. "He that overcometh shall not be hurt of the Second Death" (Rev. ii. 11). This seems of common application: yet, of those "happy and holy ones (xx. 6), who have part in the Resurrection the First,"—which perhaps may not include the whole body of believers,[1] it is said, "on those the Second Death hath no authority"; as if with some peculiar allusive emphasis, which I cannot explain.

[1] See Exposition xiii., *infra*: "The Rapture," etc.

Then the pledge, that the Overcomer's name shall not be blotted-out of the Book of Life (iii. 5), suggests the converse, that some *may* be blotted out that were once enrolled therein (cf. xxii. 19; *ἀφαιρήσει*). Yet, since the Lord gives eternal life, on believing, to as many as the Father gave Him, and pledges himself that they shall never perish (John v. 24; vi. 37–40; xvii. 2), perhaps enrolment in this Book of Life is something extraordinary and peculiar; a special honour, distinctive of self-denying fidelity to Christ (cf. Phil. iv. 3).

Ancillary to the maintenance of this Life seem the "eating of the hidden Manna" (ii. 17); and the "eating of the Tree of Life" (ii. 7). Jesus himself is the "Bread which is Living," the "Bread of Life" (John vi. 48–51); and, that life in Him is "hidden," we are reminded in Colossians iii. 3. Does not this conditional promise imply some recondite communication of *Himself* to the honoured Overcomer?

The Tree of Life was in the midst of the Garden of God before man was put there. Its fruit seems to have had the inherent property of communicating perpetuity to such as ate of it (Gen. iii. 22); and it was to prevent such perpetuation to fallen man, which would have been perpetual life in death, that he was driven out.

When the Revelation was given, the Tree of Life had been already ("*ὅ ἐστιν*") removed to the Paradise above; and to such as had access to

it perpetuity would be a blessing. In "the City which hath the Foundations" (xxii. 2), the Tree itself, and its fruitfulness, are multiplied.

2. The Crown of Rejoicing.—This seems to have specific reference to the work of the evangelist. Paul, writing, to the Thessalonian believers, the earliest of his epistles, within a few months of their having first heard the gospel, says (1 Thess. ii. 19), in apology, as it were, for his longing desire to see them again. "For what is our [my][1] hope, or joy, or crown of rejoicing? Are not even ye, in the presence of our Lord Jesus Christ, at his Advent (*παρουσία*)? For ye are the glory and the joy of us [me]."

And so, to the Philippian saints converted about the same time, he uses, with other terms of fond affection, this of *crown*. "Therefore, my brethren dearly beloved and longed for, my joy and crown, so stand fast in the Lord, my dearly beloved" (Phil. iv. 1). The word used in the former passage is *καύχησις*, properly *boasting, exultation*. It, and its cognates, occur very often in the Apostle's letters. He exults in Christ concerning his whole gospel labours (Rom. xv. 17). He boasts of the Thessalonians in all the churches of God (2 Thess. i. 4). He boasts of

[1] The plural form of the pronoun is merely idiomatic; as we use the form "you" for "thou." This is manifest from the very next verse (iii. 1). Paul is speaking of himself, personally and individually.

the Corinthians to Titus (2 Cor. vii. 14); to the Macedonians (ix. 4); and, what is more to the point, he tells them (i. 14) that they are his exultation *in the Day of the Lord Jesus*.

The Crown of Rejoicing, then, may be the peculiar recompense of the faithful preacher of Christ's gospel, at length entering into his labours; the sower become the reaper. "He that goeth forth and weepeth, bearing precious seed, shall *doubtless* come again *with rejoicing*, bringing his sheaves with him" (Ps. cxxvi. 6).

Our Saviour God, in presenting the whole church faultless before the presence of his Glory, will have *exceeding* joy (Jude 24). And Paul, in his jealousy to present the Corinthian contingent of that church to Christ (2 Cor. xi. 2), anticipates a share in his Lord's joy. And so he speaks of them, with confidence (i. 14), that they will be his boast in that Day. Again, he exhorts his Philippian children (Phil. ii. 16) to persevere in blamelessness and love, in order that he may exult in the Day of Christ.

As the splendour of this Crown of Exultation will be augmented, if not wholly caused, by the number and fulness of the sheaves to be laid at the Saviour's feet, so there must be an anxious solicitude, in the heart of a faithful minister of the Word, that the converts given to his labours prove real by their abiding; that his Crown be not dimmed in its lustre; that he lose not the things which he has wrought, but that he re-

ceive a full reward (2 John 8). And so the Apostle, who utters this warning, had before (1 John ii. 28), in a passage constantly misquoted, admonished his children in the gospel, thus: "And now, my sons, abide in Him, that when He shall appear, we [I] may have confidence, and not be ashamed before Him at his Advent." He does not allude to *their* shame, but fears lest he be put to shame by them.

Yet, as the converse to this, a solemn but most consoling stay is given to the faithful preacher (2 Cor. ii. 15): "We are unto God a sweet savour of Christ, in them that are saved, and *in them that perish.*" The presentation of the love of God in Christ to sinners is "sweet" to Him, whatever the manifest result may be. For the preacher who is endowed by the Holy Ghost is an "Ambassador on behalf of Christ; as if God were beseeching through him: he prays men to be reconciled to God in Christ's stead," *i.e.*, as if he were, in this office, the very representative and substitute of Christ. Thus, if he is only faithful in delivering his message, his acceptableness to God can in no measure depend on his success, but is the acceptableness of Christ himself. The very delivery of the Divine message is a glorifying of the Son in the sight of the Father. The same truth was shown to the prophet Ezekiel, when he was sent, with solemn oracles of judgment and mercy, to the House of Israel, "a most rebellious house,

impudent and stiff-hearted" (Ezek. ii., iii.; *passim*). Lest the young prophet should be frightened and disconcerted, he was endowed with adamantine firmness; and commissioned to declare all Jehovah's words, "whether they would hear, or whether they would forbear." It is an exceedingly solemn reflection, that, whereas, in this day of wide evangelization, those who hear the Gospel of Christ are a thousand to one of those who believe it, yet, *in them that perish,* it is a sweet savour unto God!

3. The Crown of Glory.—Perhaps there is no important difference between this and the Crown just considered. Glorying is hardly distinguishable from boasting; and, in the passages just cited, as well as others, both these words are used to render the same Greek original. Glory (δόξα), however, is used, with a much wider acceptation, for the undefinable and unimaginable splendour, greatness, magnificence, which belongs to God Himself, to the participation in which believers are called (1 Pet. v. 10), and which is yet to be unveiled (Rom. viii. 18); though decreed before the ages (1 Cor. ii. 7). This the Apostle, with remarkably cumulative phrase, speaks of, as "an eternal weight of glory, exceeding beyond excess" (2 Cor. iv. 17). And Peter (1 Pet. i. 7) gives to the saints, as the object of their trials, that they "may be found unto praise, and honour, and *glory*, at the Apocalypse of Jesus Christ."

He calls the Crown *amaranthine;* and the same word he uses as one of the epithets of the inheritance reserved in heaven for God's elect (i. 7). It is well enough rendered, on both occasions, by "that fadeth not away."

> "There everlasting Spring abides,
> And never-withering flowers":

—and the word may be compared with that employed by another Apostle (1 Cor. ix. 25), who contrasts the quickly fading chaplet of leaves on which such ardour and exertion were bestowed, with that immortal wreath which is our prize. "They do it to obtain a corruptible Crown, but we an incorruptible."

The Crown of Glory is set as the special prize of those who shepherd (*ποιμαίνω*) the flock of God: true bishops, overseers, who are not lords over the heritage (*κλήρων*), but patterns of the flock. Such, treading in the steps of the Chief Shepherd, will receive from Him, at his appearing, this amaranthine Crown. The instructing, nourishing, guiding, guarding, warning, reproving, correcting, stimulating, comforting, edifying,—of believers, are offices very precious in the esteem of the Great Shepherd of the sheep: certainly not set on a lower level than the gospel-preaching by which souls are gathered in. And we cannot wonder that some distinct reward be reserved for such as have acquitted themselves to his satisfaction thus.

Possessing a certain apparent analogy with the Crown of Glory, we may regard numerous promises of rule and authority. Such as the sitting on twelve Thrones, judging the Tribes of Israel (Matt. xix. 28), peculiar to the Apostles; the sitting on the Lord's own right hand and left hand, to be "given to them for whom it is prepared of the Father" (xx. 23), but amplified by the Son (Rev. iii. 21), to include every one that overcometh; power over the Nations; the public confession of the name, by the Lord, before the Father and his angels (iii. 5); the making the victor "a pillar in the temple of God" (iii. 12), an integral constituent part, as it were, of the very structure of God's ultimate magnificence and glory.

4. The Crown of Righteousness.—This is mentioned by Paul, in his latest extant writing (2 Tim. iv. 8), when he was expecting to seal his testimony with his blood. He was quite ready to be offered: he had fought the good fight; he had finished the running; he had kept the faith; and now he awaits the Crown, which, he is sure, the Lord will give him in that Day. For He is the Righteous Judge; and the Crown is the Crown of Righteousness. He had said just before (ii. 5), that the athlete is not crowned unless he strive lawfully; but *he* had striven according to the laws of the Judge: this the Crown would witness and reward.

Under this head may perhaps be classed all

those conditional promises which are marked by whiteness, unblemished purity:—not merely the righteousness of Christ put upon us, which is the prerogative of every believer, but blamelessness of personal conduct, the striving lawfully. Not the work of Christ for us, but the work of the Spirit in us. At the marriage of the Lamb (Rev. xix.) the Bride is arrayed in white linen, which is explained to mean the righteousnesses (*plur.*), or righteous acts, in detail, of the saints. The white stone (ii. 17); the white raiment in which some shall walk with the Lord (iii. 4, 5); seem to be rewards of this character,—recognitions of personal holiness; though associated, in each case, with something of a more private and intimate nature.

But this same Crown will be given by the Righteous Judge to all those who have loved his appearing (ἐπιφανεία). For that will be the very consummation and vindication of "that Just One, of whom man was the betrayer and murderer" (Acts vii. 52): and the highest form of righteousness is true sympathy with Him, and love of his manifestation. If this were better discerned, surely there would be more candidates for this Crown!

Running through these conditional promises, made to Overcomers in the Churches, there occur, besides the Crowns and public Honours, certain proffered privileges of a private, and even secret, character, whose value will depend

on a holy familiarity of personal affection, felt and shown by the Lord of all, to particular individuals, and calling forth the tenderest and most confiding affection from them to Him in return. Though Jesus loved all his Disciples with a deep and full love, yet among them John stands out prominent as "that disciple whom Jesus loved; who also leaned on his breast." These proffers, feebly as we can understand what they mean, are peculiarly sweet and winning: they are like the most sacred interchanges of domestic love and mutual confidence; joys, with which a stranger intermeddleth not.

The "new name on the white stone, which no one knoweth, save he that receiveth it" (ii. 17), seems to point to something peculiarly private and confidential. It may be compared with xix. 12, and the last clause in iii. 12.

No explanation may be attempted of these: they must be experienced to be known. We can only gather-up the precious *ipsissima verba* of our loving condescending Lord, and treasure them with adoring wonder, love, and hope.

When sorrow had filled the hearts of the Disciples, at the prospect of his going away, Jesus cheered them by saying (John xiv. 3), "I will come again, and receive you *unto Myself*." All the magnificence of the Mansions would be little without Himself. So, of those in Sardis whose garments are undefiled, He says (Rev. iii. 4), "They shall walk *with Me*." And if any one,

even in degenerate Laodicea, will but open the door (iii. 20), He lovingly says, "I will come in to him, and sup with him, and he with Me!" What individual intimacy is here! Nay, of the girded, waiting servants, whom, when He comes, He shall find watching, He actually says (Luke xii. 37)—that "He will gird Himself, and make them to sit down to meat, and will come forth, and serve them"! O blessed Lord! how past all imagining is thy grace!

XIII.

THE RAPTURE OF THE SAINTS.

Of the *fact* of the Rapture from earth to heaven of all believers, there can hardly be any doubt among Christians. It has been communicated "in the word of the Lord" (1 Thess. iv. 15), that the raised dead and the changed living believers "shall be caught (*snatched*, ἁρπαγησόμεθα) up, together, in clouds, to meet the Lord in the air." Whether this Rapture will be secret or public, has been matter of discussion. Some, from what is said of Enoch (Heb. xi. 5),—that "he was not *found*, because God had translated him,"—assume that so it will be when the Lord snatches up his saints; that "here one, and there another, shall secretly disappear; . . . invisibly, noiselessly, they shall vanish from the company of those about them; . . . that strange announcements shall be in the morning-papers, of missing ones" (Seiss). This, however, is not proved from Scripture: it is but conjecture.

From 1 Corinthians xv. 52, we infer that the removal of the saints will be the work of a moment. Yet it is an open question whether the moment is of actual, or of sensible, time. Supposing that,

here, the moment were the stroke of midnight; that actual moment, in the United States, is sunset; in New Zealand, noon. But if all saints were removed from earth at *sensible* midnight, the moment would be progressive, occupying twenty-four hours. And the twenty-four hours' difference would be necessarily sensible at the *east* side of the commencing point, though not at the *west*.

But of far greater importance is another question. Will the Rapture be eclectic or common? That it will be eclectic, *out of the whole of mankind*; that the ungodly will be left, there is no doubt. But will the resurrection of the saints, and especially the change and rapture of the *living* saints, occur in one band, and together; or, in successive stages,—two or more?

The importance of the question lies here. The Lord Jesus seems to present to the Churches (Rev. ii., iii.), as an incentive to overcoming, a certain priority in the common hope of believers, their ascension to his own presence. This, if rightly so understood, becomes perhaps the most potent of all the conditional promises. To the overcomer in Thyatira (ii. 28) the Lord says, "I will give him the Morning Star." But the Morning Star is Himself (xxii. 16). In what aspect, then, does He here proffer Himself?

All these promises to overcomers are associated with the resurrection-glory: these to Thyatira are of authority and rule over the nations, with

Jesus, in the Day of the Lord. He Himself is the Sun, whose manifestation makes the Day. The morning star is the harbinger of the day, rising a little while before the sun. Does this promise intimate that the Overcomer shall be introduced into the Presence of his Lord, before the Day actually begins: in precedence of all its proper acts? That, while, in the "Day that shall burn as an oven,"—"to them that fear his name the Sun of Righteousness shall arise, with healing" (Mal. iv. 1, 2); there are a select few, who shall meet Him, even before that; and be associated with Him in "treading down the wicked"?

And this is greatly confirmed by what is said to a later Church. If, by these Seven Churches in Asia, successive stages of the Church general, through the age, are intended,[1] then Philadelphia, the last but one, may very probably answer to the state now existing; that of Laodicea being parallel to, and contemporary with, it; yet successive, because of the performance of this promise.

That the Day of the Lord will be introduced by terrible and sore judgments, especially on

[1] When, in 1866, I published my tractate, "The Revelation, how is it to be interpreted?" I dissented from this conclusion. Further consideration, however, has changed my judgment on this point; though difficulties of detail remain. In the general argument of that work, I have no alteration to make.

"the earth" (ἡ γῆ) of Prophecy, "the inhabited world" (ἡ οἰκουμένη), is abundantly clear: and the "vine of the earth," which is trodden in "the wine-press of wrath" (Isa. lxiii. 3; Rev. xiv. 17), seems to be, indubitably, the false apostate church. To this the Lord seems to allude as "the season of trial which is about to come on the whole inhabited world, to try such as are dwelling (*lit.* down-dwelling) upon the earth." And He says, He will keep the Philadelphian Church (not *through* it, unharmed, but) *out of* it (ἐκ). How? except by snatching them away from the earth to Himself, before one drop of the storm, one stone of the "great hail," descends?

But, when these are taken, evidently some are left, even those "dwellers upon the earth." Now this term often designates the haters and persecutors of Christ's saints; the apostates who worship the Papal Beast; false professors, in contrast to such as dwell in heaven. And, in the great Prophecy on the Mount of Olives (Luke xxi.), which, beginning with the Roman Desolation, runs on to the Coming of the Son of Man, the Lord warns his disciples to take heed lest *that Day* take them unawares; because "as a snare it shall come on all that are *sitting-down* on the earth." The distinction *may be* no other than the vital severance between the wheat and the tares; between the just and the wicked; which, in usual interpretation, marks the First Resur-

rection; the *left* living not again till the thousand years be finished; *left* to the Great White Throne.

Yet, perhaps, these *left* are not wholly, universally, finally, lost. For, if we may regard the Laodiceans as the professors of Christianity, left behind after the Philadelphian overcomers are gone, and thus "spued out of Christ's mouth,"—we yet hear Him speaking of love, manifested in rebuke; counselling and exhorting, and proffering, even to them:—while magnificent promises imply that, even out of them, there will yet emerge some Overcomers, though late.

So, in chap. xiv., after the 144,000 firstfruits to God and the Lamb are redeemed from the earth, and stand singing the New Song before the Throne;—there is yet a Gospel preached to the "dwellers on the earth" (ver. 6). And, later still, after Babylon has fallen (8), and the eternal doom is fixed (9) on every one *then* found worshipping (it is the pres. *indic.*, προσκυνεῖ) the Beast,—there is a harvest reaped by the Son of Man (14); though it is the harvest of the earth, and though it is *dried*. Yet, not till this harvest is garnered, is the vine of the earth trodden (18).

Up to the very doom of Babylon the Great, by which I understand Rome in some sense (perhaps Papal Christendom, or Mediterranean Europe), there are still God's people in her, who are imperatively called (xviii. 4) to come out of her. This is always interpreted as a warning to real

Christians to separate themselves from the apostate fellowship,—from Church communion. But, unless I greatly err, it is something very different from this.

The summons extends through four verses: in vv. 6, 7 God commands his people to execute retributive judgment on the Great Whore; to give her torment. Mark well: God does not say, "*I* am about to do this," but "Come out of her, my people, and do it!" evidently, "Come out, in order that ye may do it!" But saints, while in this mortal state, are never bidden to retaliate, or execute vengeance. Their Lord did not, when down here; and we are called (1 Pet. ii. 21–23) to follow his steps. The time is coming, indeed, when "this honour will have all his saints (Ps. cxlix. 5–9); to execute, as they sing God's high praises on their Divâns, the judgment written." Since, then, saints must not do this, in their earthly mortal condition,—and yet they are called expressly to do it;—does it not necessarily follow that the call from heaven is none other than the imperative summons, the shout of the Archangel, to mount, in the twinkling of an eye, in glorified bodies, clothed-upon, to Himself? And Babylon falls!

What is the next scene? Instantly (xix. 1) there is "a great crowd in heaven," apparently suddenly come thither; who, first, shout triumphant praises to Jah, that the Great Whore is judged; while, looking down to earth, they see

her smoke rising up from her unquenchable fire. And then, follow the Marriage of the Lamb, and the Marriage-supper.

Perhaps it is not extravagant to suggest some such order as the following. I say no more than *suggest:* for, in indicating what is still future, on which so much of diversity of judgment exists, I wish to avoid unseemly confidence of assertion.

It has been said that, in the Apocalypse, there is no indication of the exact moment of the Rapture of the Church. No description of the grand fact can we find, certainly. But, if this is divided into two stages, may not the first eclectic stage, —the translation of the few chosen, be at xiv. 1, and the second, that of the mass, now tried and purged, at xiv. 14; in the Parenthesis written on the back side of the Seven-sealed Scroll?—While, in the successive order of the within-written portion, both are presented again. For, under the Sixth Vial,[1] while the Euphratean Power is gradually wasting, and the unclean spirits are busy gathering the kings of the οἰκουμένη to the War of the Great Day of God Almighty,—just before these are actually gathered,—a startling

[1] I do not interpret the Apocalypse on the Futurist but on the Presentist, scheme; for reasons given in detail in my treatises, "The Revelation: how is it to be interpreted?" and "The Great Tribulation" (Morgan & Chase). But in the present Essay, I desire to avoid polemics, as much as possible.

Cry interrupts the narrative, "Behold, I come as a thief!"—and the story goes instantly on to Armageddon. May not this be the first select stage, again? The Lord Jesus, unexpectedly, in a tumult of European politics, suddenly, silently, snatches up his faithful, watchful few, his first-fruits, scarcely missed, in the crowd of great impending wars. And the second stage (as just now intimated) occurs, in this series, somewhat later, when the Seventh Vial has been poured out, and when Babylon's judgment is imminent; as at xvi. 19; and, in fuller detail, xviii. 2–4.[1]

Possibly, these saints, relegated for unreadiness to terrible trial, may be represented, in the Parables, by the unprofitable servant, who is cast into the outer darkness.

When the Lord Jesus, at the end of his great Prophecy on the Mount of Olives, warns his disciples, lest they be overtaken unawares, by the terrible "Day that shall come, as a snare,

[1] The Elders and Living Ones in heaven (Rev. iv.) and also the Great Multitude (vii.);—do not appear to me to signify any assumption to heaven of embodied saints. The former, in my judgment, depicts the present representative session in the Superheavenlies, as in Eph. ii. 6; the latter, the disembodied saints gradually gathered into Paradise by death, throughout the dispensation.

Rev. xiv. 1–5 and xvi. 15 may both refer to one (the select) Rapture: xiv. 14–16 and xviii. 4–7 may also refer to one (the delayed) Rapture. But I do not affirm that it is so.

on all that are sitting down on the earth" (Luke xxi. 35),—He adds this monition, "Watch ye, therefore, and pray, always, that ye may be accounted worthy to escape all these things that are about to come to pass, and to stand before the Son of Man!"

Is not this *standing before* Him something very select and peculiar? Do not the being counted worthy to escape, and the exhortation to instant prayer for it, imply that some disciples will *not* be counted worthy, and will *not* escape? And if we ask what things we should pray that we may escape,—are they not the fearful things that mark the fulfilling of the Times of the Gentiles (22–35)?

The Parable of the Ten Virgins (Matt. xxv. 1) may imply the same solemn hint. The five *foolish* are still *virgins*, as well as the wise: they set out equally to meet the Bridegroom: they have lamps, which burn for a while, but at length are going out (marg.). Is it certain that the Lord meant, by these foolish virgins, unconverted professors? and not careless, earthly believers? Is it safe to say, The parable does not concern me at all, since, though I am too earthly minded, and too sluggish in spiritual things, yet I am sure I have been converted to God, and so the door can never be shut against me?" Is this absolutely certain?

We may assume that the whole body of raised saints sit on the Thrones, and constitute the

"First Resurrection" of Revelation xx. They are, indeed, thus mentioned after the Marriage, and after the doom of the Beast, in ch. xix. These reigning Priests must be the whole Church; the priority in blessing of the few firstfruits not affecting the final destiny of the whole united body. It has been suggested that the distinction between the Lamb's Wife, and those who are called to the Supper (xix. 7–9), implies that only a selection out of the saved have the dignity of the Wife. But the Wife and the Church and the Body are the same thing (Eph. i. 23; v. 30–32); and *all* the members go to make up the body (1 Cor. xii.).[1]

It must be allowed that none of these Scriptures do categorically *prove* that there is any precedence in resurrection of the saved. Also that, in passages wherein the details are most fully stated, it is not easy to find place for such precedence. In John xiv. 3, when the Lord says, "I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, ye may be also,"—He makes no distinction; He does not say,—"some of you."

The apostle (1 Cor. xv. 51) says, "We shall all be changed, in a moment . . . at the last trump." Certainly this *moment* and this *trump*

[1] The same consideration seems to be fatal to that hypothesis which makes disapproved believers to have no part in resurrection till the thousand years be finished.

seem hardly consistent with stages of the process, separated by months or years. So, in 1 Thessalonians iv. there seems but one descent of the Lord, one shout, one voice, one trump, at which the dead in Christ rise, and the living are rapt away with them. It is difficult to imagine, that, before this great scene, a number of Saints, both raised dead and changed living, have already been snatched away. Especially is it hard to suppose that those whose resurrection and rapture are here described, are the careless, earthly, and therefore mulcted, portion of the Church; since the Apostle, in both these passages, by using the word "we," associates himself with them, not personally indeed, but in character and status. For those of whom Paul says, "we," must surely be the very highest class of believers.

Thus much may be advanced from Holy Scripture, for and against these conflicting views. Fancy and speculation should be kept in abeyance: and though, in arguing such recondite questions, there is in us all a tendency to array and accumulate only the evidence that supports the particular decision which we have made; and to try to forget, or make light of, so that others may forget, what can be adduced on the other side,—we shall never arrive at the Truth of God in this way; and whatever triumph we may so achieve will but recoil on ourselves, and bring no fruit to God. I do not know how to meet, satisfactorily, the objections to Eclectic

Rapture just stated. And yet it does appear to my own mind that the evidence in favour of it, especially that from the promise to the Philadelphian Church, so much preponderates, as to throw the probabilities greatly on this side.

If this is so; and if the exegesis is correct which considers the Asian Churches successive; how transcendently important, to us now living, become the promise, and its implied warning! Blessed be God, there has been for a century past a very manifest increase, in the Church of God, of value for the Word; of separation from evil; of brotherly love; of patient waiting; of longing for Christ's appearing;—which indubitably reflect, in a measure hitherto unwonted, the Philadelphian likeness. On the other hand, there exist, in the professing Church, side by side with the former traits,—an increasing lukewarmness; an esteem for, and assimilation to, this present world; a sitting-down, a building and dwelling, on the earth; a haste to be rich; combined with unworthy thoughts of the truth of God, and a readiness to subordinate the Scripture, which "cannot be broken," to the deductions of mere human Science; and with inordinate glorying in works of beneficence and amelioration, and even evangelization, effected by human labour, and co-operation, by money, and power, and skill, and effort of man;—which are all, palpably and unmistakably, Laodicean features.

So that it seems no more than normal, it seems but in harmony with the character and ways of the "righteous Lord who loveth righteousness," that He should make some visible difference and discernment "between him that serveth God and him that serveth Him not." And though we dare not say that it would be in this mode of sparing his jewels,—"as a man spareth his own son that serveth him,"—because, as we have seen, the Lord might fall back on the Judgment according to works, so soon to supervene, where all would be set right; yet, if it please Him to do it in this mode also, we may humbly say, it seems worthy of Him!

"Wherefore, beloved, seeing that ye look for such things, be diligent that ye may be found of Him in peace, without spot, and blameless!"

XIV.

CHRIST IN THE PSALMS. I.

The saints of God in all ages have found the Book of Psalms a peculiarly precious portion of the Word. It stands alone, separating the historical books on one side, from the prophetical on the other; itself being very distinct from either. The Lord divides the Scripture then extant into three parts, saying (Luke xxiv. 44), that all things written in the Law of Moses, and in the Prophets, and in the Psalms, must be fulfilled about Himself. There is no book of the Bible that is so often quoted in the New Testament as the Psalms. More than half of the whole number (82) are quoted: several of them many times.

The instinct of the new nature in the believer has doubtless led to the estimation in which this book has been held. Its contents almost wholly consist of direct converse with God;—of confessions, prayers, supplications, intercessions, appeals, agonized cries; of expressions of complacency, love, confidence, hope, joy; of praise and thanks on a multitude of grounds: so that these inspired Hymns seem to meet the saint in

all his moods, in all his needs; to be a vehicle of thought and expression always ready to hand for intercourse with the Father of spirits.

Perhaps this instinctive sense of the preciousness of the Psalms is truer than the knowledge habitually exercised upon them. Let us bring the light of the Spirit's very ample use of them in the New Testament to bear on this book of unique structure and unique excellence. As a whole, the collection is usually attributed to David as author;—"the Psalms of David": nay, the Spirit has used (Heb. iv. 7) the name, elliptically, just as we familiarly quote a modern author, "in Milton"; "in Gibbon"; "saying, in David."

Let our devout attention, however, be engaged not on the literary, or artistic, or musical, or historical, or antiquarian aspects of the Book, interesting though these all be, in their season;—but on this question:—What does the inspiring Spirit propose by inserting this great collection of Poems in the ancient Scripture, and by his elaborate and manifold citations of them in the new?

What is the secret of the high honour which He attaches to this Book, to which the instinctive inner sense of the Christian, often deeper, higher, truer, holier, than any clearly defining mental power,—so heartily responds? Is not the secret this? The Psalms are the experiences—if of David, only slightly, superficially, unimportantly; often, *not at all;* but mainly of the great Son of

David, the true "David," *i.e.* the *Beloved;* the Son of God and Son of Man; the Word become Flesh. It may seem rash even to suggest that experience written by David should ever be "not David's experience at all." Yet Peter, on the day of Pentecost, cites the words of Psalms xvi. and cx., not as containing an underlying sense which *might be applied* to Messiah, but as absolutely *not true* of David;[1] having *no relation at all* to David's personal circumstances; but uttered by him in his prophetic character, *solely* concerning his glorious Descendant and Antitype, the Christ of God. And this exegesis the Apostle makes "with boldness" (μετὰ παῤῥησίας), as if aware that some among his hearers might be stumbled by it. This oracle of the Holy Ghost, uttered at the very outset of his ministration in the Church, is of great value for determining the question now before us.

It would seem to be a principle of exposition, too self-evident to need formal argument, that, if we can satisfactorily identify a speaker (or a person addressed), *in any part* of a Psalm, the same speaker bears the same relation *throughout* that Psalm; unless a change of person is patent on the surface. Thus, if I can be sure that, in Psalm lxix., he who says (ver. 9), "the reproaches of them that reproached Thee are fallen upon me" is the Lord Christ (Rom. xv. 3), I am sure that he who says (ver. 12), "I was the song

[1] So also does Paul (Acts xiii. 35–37).

of the drunkards," must be the very same Person. And this not a whit the less because of any real or supposed difficulty in the identification.

Throughout the book we find certain broad salient features of character and circumstance, occurring again and again, delineated with such precision of individuality that, after a few observations, we cannot help recognizing the identity. Thus, the Book opens with the portrait of a Man, whose delight is in the law of Jehovah, who meditates therein day and night; whose righteous cause is sure ultimately to prosper. Presently (Ps. vii.) we find one appealing to Jehovah to judge him, "according to mine integrity that is in me"; avowing that his defence is of God, "who saveth the upright in heart." Then (xv., xxiv.) we hear authoritative challenges, demanding who, among men, can claim to ascend Jehovah's Holy Hill, of right, and to dwell there; and One accepts the challenge, on the ground of his sinless uprightness of walk, his cleanness of hands, and his purity of heart. And lo! we presently discover, as the everlasting doors open to receive this Righteous Man, this King of Glory, it is none other than Jehovah of Hosts Himself!

Now the portrait of this Man of spotless uprightness and lustrous holiness is of constant recurrence. Wherever we see the lineaments we may be sure that we have before us that "Lamb without blemish and without spot," who when He had just "convicted, in their own conscience"

(John viii. 9), his rancorous foes, could fearlessly say (ver. 46), "Which of you convinceth *Me* of sin?" This feature alone will identify Jesus in Psalms 1, 4, 5, 7, 9, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 24, 25, 26, 35, 37, 38, 41; and many others.

But this holy One meets with little sympathy from men. He is "small and despised"; hated without a cause; reproached for his very faithfulness; his love is met with the basest ingratitude; his steps are dogged, his words are distorted, by ever watchful enemies, numerous, lively, strong, unceasing, cruel, unmerciful, implacable, false. Very many Psalms are largely occupied by the godly Man's appeals to God's knowledge of the falsity of the charges brought against him, prayers for protection from their oppressive violence, and for deliverance from the snares which they are privily laying for his feet. It is the bitter hatred of the Scribes and Pharisees in the gospels (Matt. xxii. 15, 46; Lu. xix. 47; xx. 20; John xi. 46); but depicted more vividly, in far fuller detail; and not merely as an historical incident, but as it told upon the wounded heart of the Blessed One himself, and as it was spread before his Father in secret. For this, see Psalms 3, 4, 5, 7, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 27, 28, 31, 35, 41, 71, 109, 118, 119, 129, 140, 141, 142, 143,—*cum mult. al.*

It follows necessarily, from the blameless purity of this Man, and from his enemies' hatred of him *on this account*,—that they must be the

enemies and haters of God also. Yet this is a distinct aspect, and is distinctly treated. The zeal of the righteous One for God's honour produces revulsion of feeling against the proud doers, which is distinguished from the "heartbreaking," and heaviness of spirit (lxix. 20), produced by their merciless reproaches of himself. He becomes "overwhelmed with horror" (cxix. 53), because of the wicked's forsaking God's law. And this forms a frequent subject of complaint, in this holy One's conferences with his Heavenly Father. Examples are Psalms 7, 9, 11, 12, 14, 17, 18, 36, 37, 49, 73, etc.

In Psalm lxix. the same Speaker that is hated without a cause; whom the zeal of God's house hath eaten up; who has gall and vinegar given to him;—is found sinking in deep mire where there is no standing; cries for deliverance because the waters are come in unto his soul, even deep waters whose floods are overflowing him: he is weary of his crying; his eyes fail while he waits for his God: he says, "O God, Thou knowest my foolishness; and my sins [guiltiness, *marg.*] are not hid from Thee!" Mark this attentively. The very same person who constantly pleads his perfect uprightness and innocence in the sight of God Himself, says, "*My* foolishness and *my* guilt"! What an apparent contradiction is here! But we are certain that the speaker in the former passages is Jesus, on the Spirit's own testimony (John xv. 25; ii. 17;

xix. 29, 30; Matt. xxvii. 34). Therefore it is over the holy head of Christ that the floods of God's wrath are flowing, and it is Christ who says, "My foolishness; my guilt"!

So, in Psalm xxii., the forsaken of God; who cries day and night, but is not heard; who yet vindicates the holiness even of the Divine silence; the reproached and despised; who trusts in Jehovah that He will deliver him, and is laughed to scorn for his confidence; who beholds, at his feet,—his pierced feet,—his garments parted, his vesture gambled for;—we are certain that this, too, is the same blessed Jesus (Matt. xxvii. 46; 43; John xix. 23, 24; xx. 25). And we know how to reconcile the seeming contradiction: the mystery is an opened secret: for God "hath made Him to be sin, for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him" (2 Cor. v. 21).

A multitude of Psalms come into this category;—the holy Lamb bruised under the wrath of God for sin, which He made his own vicariously, but never committed: as 6, 18, 22, 25, 32, 38, 39, 40, 41, 69, 77, 88, 130, etc.

Again, there are certain descriptive phrases, by which the same blessed One is designated, and which recur so often as to become characteristic, and almost conventional. So that if we can once with certitude determine the application of the phrase to the Lord Jesus, we may identify it again whenever it occurs. Thus, in Psalm xl.—

that grand unveiling of the Council held between the Father and the Son "before eternal times," —we find the Son, come down to his characteristic low estate, saying,—"But I am poor and needy!" This poor man very frequently appears in the Psalms: the next Psalm, nay, the very next following verse to the word just cited, says, "Blessed is he that considereth the poor [man]." What poor man? Is it any beggar that solicits my alms? Surely no: but the definite "poor and needy one," who is on Jehovah's side; whose help and deliverer Jehovah (lxx. 5) is. Psalms 9, 10, 12, 14, 34, 35, 37, 40, 41, 70, 86, 107, 109, 113, 140, afford this note of identification.

Another such characteristic mark is the trusting in God. For, though it might be said, This is a common property of all the godly, and cannot be honestly used to identify the Man Christ Jesus, yet the Holy Ghost does so isolate and appropriate the phrase. For, in citing (Heb. ii. 13) testimonies from Scripture, that the Son came down to the level of God's elect, he says, quite nakedly and without comment,—"And again, 'I will put my trust in Him.'" Strictly, it is, "I will be [habitually] trusting";—marking, not an act, but a characteristic habit. Now, unless we charge the All-wise Spirit with citing a witness that was so vague as to be worthless, we must own this as an identifying mark of our Lord. And, carefully noting its occurrence in the Psalms, we shall have no difficulty in

tracing Him, wherever the phrase is found: as in Psalms 7, 11, 16, 18, 21, 23, 25, 26, 28, 31, 34, 38, 40, 52, 61, 62, 71, 86, 141, 144, etc.

Sometimes we are carried onward from the depth of humiliation of this needy trusting One to the triumph of his Resurrection:—as in Psalms 18, 21 (compared with 20), 22, 24, 30, 40, 68, 116, 118; etc. And sometimes to the everlasting Glories that shall follow;—as in Psalms 2, 29, 45, 50, 72, 110, 149. He is sometimes seen as the Son of David and King of Israel, celebrating, by anticipation, the Restoration, Exaltation, and eternal Establishment of the united Nation, and his Throne in Zion: as in Psalms 9, 10, 14, 46, 47, 48, 67, 72, 75, 79–85, 144, and many others, particularly in the latter half of the Book. And sometimes He leads the high praises of his saints, not only of the earthly, but also of the heavenly Jerusalem: as in Psalms 22, 103, 104, 111, 145–150.

In some of all these, there may be occasionally discerned, here and there, an allusion, more or less patent, to incidents in the private and personal life of David. But these are typical; and the interest which attaches to them in this book of Holy Scripture, is not on their own account, but on account of such aspects of our Lord as they represent. Thus in Psalms 41, 69, 109; there is doubtless allusion to the ingratitude and treachery of Ahithophel (2 Sam. xvi.); but, in citations of these Psalms by the Lord Jesus and

the Holy Spirit (John xiii. 18; Acts i. 20; Rom. xi. 9), Ahithophel and David become evanescent; and the wronged Jesus is seen bringing before the "righteous Father," for judgment, the case of the Traitor Judas, the Son of Perdition, and that of the blinded nation, who shared his guilt, as well as his name.[1]

Pursuing the clues thus indicated, the devout

[1] We may take Psalm cxvi. as a Resurrection-Song of the Lord, in which He seems to have left death behind Him. The 15th verse thus recognizes the value of his vicarious death;—"Precious in the sight of Jehovah is the Death *for* his saints," the change of the preposition "of" to "for" making intelligible what before had little meaning. The Apostle Paul, in 2 Corinthians iv. 13, 14, cites the Psalm of Him. So similar are the trains of thought in Psalm xxvii., and so parallel even the expressions, that we can hardly avoid predicating the same of both;—such as his sense of deliverance from cruel enemies; from trouble, and terror, and tears, and death; his dwelling in the House of Jehovah now *all the days of his life*, his walking before Jehovah *in the land of the living;* his offering his sacrifices of joy and praise; and his paying of his vows.

One remarkable incident, recalled with grateful praise (xxvii. 2, 3), seems to be the same as is recorded (John xviii. 3–6) as having occurred in that scene of agony, the Garden of Gethsemane. Judas, the Traitor, headed a band of officers and soldiers—"an host encamping against Him," who, coming to take Him, presently "stumbled and fell": for they "went backward and fell to the ground."

Yet verses 9 and 10 seem irreconcilable with such an exegesis of the Psalm.

and diligent student may, without hesitation, find the Man Christ Jesus in (and therefore throughout, as above shown) a very large number of these Divine Odes. The sweet familiarity of love will, of course, very sensibly aid the recognition: we may easily pass by his features, if we value Him but little. Then there remain a considerable number, in which there is so close an analogy with these, that, though we may not see in them the specific marks of diagnosis, and so would not venture to cite them *in evidence*, we may, if they contain nothing contrary, assume that they follow the general rule. If such be added, there will be left scarcely more than a dozen or twenty Psalms, that present any serious difficulty in assigning them to the Lord Jesus. Perhaps Psalm li., the personal contrition of David; lxxiii., the temptation and recovery of Asaph; xci., the prayer of Moses; cxxxvii., the lament of the captives in Babylon; and a few more, are such exceptions. But, possibly, the difficulty here is not insuperable.

Such an exegesis of the Psalms was first suggested to myself by the remarkable way in which the New Testament quotes them. For instance, Paul (Rom. xv. 3) says, "For even Christ pleased not Himself; but, as it is written, 'the reproaches of them that reproached Thee fell on me.'" The words are from Psalm lxix. 9. But their relevancy entirely depends on the fact that Christ is the speaker there; and, indeed,

on his readers' *knowing* that He is. For if they had been used to see David in that psalm, might they not reasonably have replied, "How does reproach falling on David prove that Christ pleased not himself?" But Paul takes no pains to show that Christ is the speaker: he makes no apology or explanation: but assumes it as without controversy; takes for granted that his readers will cordially assent to his reasoning. But this could not be, unless the principle herein maintained had been generally accepted.

If this interpretation is according to God, what an exceeding interest attaches to the Book of Psalms! Is it not like opening a new "Life of Jesus"? A Biography: quite distinct from either of the Gospels, unveiling a quite new aspect of Him; even his inner life: his heart and soul, laid open in unrestrained intercourse with the Father. We might almost say, an Autobiography; for here are the very words in which He expresses his thoughts and feelings;—words taken down, with infallible truth and precision, by an unerring Amanuensis, even the Holy Ghost. That Psalms xxii. and lxix. are no less than this, no instructed Christian would think of denying. It is but an extension of the principle to the whole Book, that is contended for.

How valuable, how precious, would be a Diary of Jesus! Here is one. The Gospels are perfect as portraits of his outer life:—his acts; and many of his words. Here are his very thoughts!

There He says, "How often would I have gathered thy children together . . . and ye would not." Here, "When they were sick, my clothing was sackcloth." There he faces his proud detractors without a word, without the quiver of a muscle. Here, looking up to his Father, He says, "Reproach hath broken my heart!" There we see his practical obedience. Here we hear Him saying, "O how love I thy law! it is my meditation all the day. The law of thy mouth is better unto me than thousands of gold and silver." There we see the holy Child sitting in the midst of the Doctors, hearing them and asking them questions. Here, He has more understanding than all his teachers; more than the ancients: because He keeps God's precepts. There, a cup of bitterness is put into his hand. Here, as He gazes into its depth, he cries, "Innumerable evils have compassed me about: mine iniquities have taken hold upon me, so that I am not able to look up: they are more than the hairs of mine head: therefore my heart faileth me."

XV.

CHRIST IN THE PSALMS. II.

If indeed the Psalms express the communings of Jesus with the Father, recorded thus, in wondrous guise, beforehand, this must surely be for the enriching of his saints: for all Scripture is profitable. And most interesting, too, it must be to such as love Him, to seek with all diligence fresh glimpses of the Beloved Son in whom God was always well pleased. These communings are not, indeed, presented in chronological sequence, nor ticketed with titles connecting each with a definite incident or period, indicated in the Gospels. Yet some "loops of blue and taches of gold" are to be discovered in them, whereby we may reverently venture to link the inward thought with the outward condition. It is, indeed, holy ground: and I would put off my shoes from my feet, as I endeavour, with the reverence of love, to trace his shining steps. Imagination may easily run riot here.

In Psalm cxix.,—that Divine Poem of great length, of elaborate structure, and of incomparable beauty, we have a photograph of the holy Child, perhaps in a period of life, of which not a

glimpse is given in the Gospels. From twelve years old to thirty; from the end of Luke ii., to the beginning of Luke iii., eighteen years passed, over which a veil is drawn. What if Psalm cxix. portray this period?

In Psalm i. we saw God's model of Man, pronounced "Blessed." He delights in the Law of Jehovah: he meditates in it day and night. In this Psalm cxix. we recognise the same features; the same title of "Blessed" (1, 2); the same delight (70, 167, 174) in the Law; the same constant meditation in it (48, 97, 148); the same walk in the same ways (30, 33, 59, 101, 105).

It is a *young* man (8) that is before us: one that is still learning (104, 125, 130); still being taught (12, 26, 33, 171); still under human teachers, but already excelling them (99, 100).

He has long ago steadfastly set his face (106, 112) for Jehovah. He is reproached and contemned (22, 39) for his devotion. Princes sit and speak against him (23); the proud have him greatly in derision (51). Perhaps the Sanhedrim[1] itself said, the Galilean youth was going too far; was a hypocrite.

He is no stranger to the temptations incident to youth (9, 37, 113), but resists them in the fear

[1] In those 18 years, Jesus may have gone up to Jerusalem, to keep the Feasts of the Lord, more than fifty times. And probably he came into contact with men of all ranks,—kings (46) even,—in many diverse circumstances.

of God (120). Though young, his life is a pilgrimage (54); but he has the solace of sacred song. Perhaps, by this time, Joseph was dead; and the lowly trade was carried on by the young carpenter, Jesus. He is alone in the shop all day, diligent in his business, faithful in his work, but his heart is with God; the Law is his meditation all the day (97). This is well known: therefore he is small and despised (22, 141); is thought very narrow. Trouble, and even anguish (143), take hold on him; nay, even horror (53), because of the wicked: rivers of water run down his eyes (136), because, all around, they keep not God's Law. They hang about the shop-door, laying snares for him (110); persecute him (157, 86, 87); oppress him (121); reproach him wrongfully (42); forge lies against him (69):— so that he is compelled to say, "Depart from me, ye evil-doers" (115). He carries his life in his hand constantly (109).

But he steadily cleaves to the Law, and errs not from God's precepts (110). Nor is his tongue silent for Jehovah (43, 46, 172). Seven times a day he praises Him (164); he rises before the dawn to pray (147); he meditates in the night-watches (55, 62, 148). In spite of his anguish and tears, he has great peace, and nothing stumbles him (165). What are the themes of his habitual meditation and praise? The righteousness of God (7, 62, 75); his truth (86, 90); his goodness (68); his merciful kind-

ness (76, 77, 88, 132); his providence (64, 90); the wonders in the Law (18, 27); human failure (96); the doom of the wicked (21, 53, 84, 118, 126); the hope set before himself (49, 81, 114, 116).

He repeatedly alludes to his having been afflicted (50, 67, 71, 92, 107), and to its spiritual[1] value. In Psalm lxxxviii., which describes him under the pressure of the wrath of God, perhaps at a later period, he says, "I am afflicted and ready to die *from my youth up*." His soul faints (81); melts (28); breaks (20); cleaves to the dust in sorrow (25). He is like a lost sheep wandering in the wilderness (176); no one caring for his soul (cxlii. 4);—yet ever trusting Jehovah his Shepherd, who refreshes his soul (xxiii. 3); a stranger in the earth (19).

Surrounded by bands of the wicked (61), there were yet a few whose godly fear of Jehovah led them to value the young Nazarene (74, 79); these were his chosen companions (63); and in these was his delight.

[1] The word שָׁגָה "went astray" (67) means *was ignorant, mistook;* and is thus used frequently, in Lev. iv., and Num. xv. As the sinless Child grew in wisdom, he must have misunderstood at one time, what he more fully understood afterwards; and he ascribes the improvement to the study of the Word. In Heb. v. 8, he is said to have "learned obedience by the things which he suffered"; and this suffering may have been sickness in youth. There may be *sin through* ignorance; but ignorance is not sin.

But the incessant reference to the word of God, and his unbounded delight in it, can be estimated only by a continuous reading of this wonderful record. It recurs almost at every sentence. Whatever circumstance, or incident, or person, may claim his momentary notice, his spirit gladly bounds back to God. A vivid picturing, in minute detail, of what is so prominent in John's Gospel;—"I seek not mine own will, but the will of the Father, who sent me."

O blessed Jesus! how art thou our perfect Pattern, as well as our perfect Saviour!

Perhaps we may reverently consider this Psalm cxix. to be the Spirit's portrait of the Son of Man during the second decade of the thirty years of his præ-ministerial life on earth.

The above allusions to *affliction* derive augmented force from notices, much more definite, in other Psalms, especially xxx.–xli. Much, indeed, seems very obscure. The ordinary tokens of Jesus are not doubtful in them: his enemies hate him wrongfully; lay snares for him; reproach him falsely; seek to slay him; exult in his affliction; render him evil for good. He follows the thing that good is; calls Jehovah "my Salvation"; makes Jehovah his trust; is poor and needy; confesses sin, and yet avows that Jehovah upholds him in his integrity, and will set him before his face for ever. In the Gospel (John xiii. 18) Jesus himself appropriates this Psalm xli.

That this innocent One is suffering deeper pangs than any that the cruelty of man can inflict, is clear. His sense of the wrath and hot displeasure of God (xxxviii. 1) is nowhere expressed more vividly than here. And his referring this pressure to sin, calling it "my sin" (3), and "mine iniquities" (4), is full and indubitable. So that, beyond a shadow of doubt, the speaker is Christ, vicariously bearing his people's sin.

Yet it seems impracticable to assign these utterances to the Cross. And if it is true, as has been argued, that He was not vicarious till He actually hung on the cross, these Psalms seem utterly inexplicable.

But why cannot they be referred to the Cross? Because of the bodily disease under which he is suffering (7); under which he mourns, *all the day long* (6); the sore, from which his friends stand aloof (11); while his foes are still laying their snares, *all the day long* (12). Because, in xli., the sickness confines him to his bed (3); his enemies come to see him, and speak vanity, telling it then *abroad* (6); and hoping, that, now he *lieth*, he shall rise up no more (8). All these features, together, cannot consist with the three hours on the Cross.

The "wounds that stink and are corrupt" have been explained as figures of speech for the moral condition of those whom this Holy One represented: and the expressions in Isaiah i. 5, 6,

have been cited as parallel. But there seem forcible reasons against the figurative or tropical, and in favour of the literal and bodily, sense, here. The wounds are *caused* by the foolishness: cause and effect are not, surely, the same thing. The lovers and friends stand aloof. Would they be repelled by what was only putative, seen only by God, judicially? For there was no moral loathsomeness that man could detect, in Him. Then "the bed of languishing," and "his sickness," in xli., and his enemies (*one* in particular) coming to see him, gloating over his "evil disease," and anticipating its fatal issue; —all throw their light on the foregoing; and, precluding the spiritual application, shut us up to the actual condition of a bodily disease, terrible to feel and to see, and of repulsive symptoms.

The word כָּלָה (*kalah*), rendered "loathsome [disease]," is elsewhere more literally, "dried, parched, or roasted." Presuming that, in the sense of "scorching heat," it does refer to the body, we might not attribute the idea of loathsomeness to the word, *if it stood alone*. But we cannot shut out the "wounds stinking and corrupt," in verse 5; the "*sore* that ran in the night, and ceased not" (11; lxxvii. 2); the "thing of Belial," that confined him to his bed (xli. 8); and the standing aloof, afar off, of even the lovers and friends and kinsmen, from his sore. Parching, scorching fever might well be a most painful accompaniment of such a dis-

order; but these vivid phrases seem to indicate patent sensible lesions of the body-surface.

Psalms lxxi., lxxvii., cii., cix., and others, have so much in common with the group we are considering, that we may confidently assign them to the same period and the same circumstances. Take Psalm cii. The speaker is eminently "afflicted;—overwhelmed" (title); one phase of the suffering is in his body; the same burning, consuming, parching heat in his bones, "withering him like grass" (3, 4, 11); the same wasting of vital power, so that his bones are seen through his skin (cf. xxii. 17; cix. 24). And all this he attributes to the wrath of God (ver. 10); for the words used, "thine indignation and thy wrath,"—are the same as occur in xxxviii. 1, 3; words of terrible intensity. It is under the heavy pressure of the Divine anger, that his days appear hastening prematurely to an end, "like the shadow that declineth" (cf. cix. 23; cxliv. 4).

Yet this experience of wrath is not that of the three hours of the Cross. He complains of his solitariness (6); his forgetting to eat his bread (4); his lonely watchings (7); his enemies' reproach *all the day* (8); he prays that he may not be taken away *in the midst* of his days (24); —all which point to conditions of long standing and habitual; not sudden and abnormal, as those of the Cross. Above all, even while he mourns the indignation and wrath of God, he receives

the consolation and sustentation of a direct communication from Him, even one of marvellous power. The Divine answer breaks-in, with a most startling suddenness, as the wail of the Mourner is at the lowest. "Take me not away in the midst of my days!"[1]

"Thy years are throughout all generations: of old hast Thou laid the foundations of the earth, and the heavens are the work of thy hands. They shall perish, but Thou shalt endure: yea, all of them shall wax old like a garment; as a vesture shalt Thou change them, and they shall be changed: but Thou art the same; and thy years shall have no end!"

Surely, "the voice of Jehovah is powerful; the voice of Jehovah is full of majesty!" And we are absolutely certain of this exegesis, since the Holy Ghost tells us (Heb. i. 10) that the words are addressed by the Father to the Son.

Perhaps there is in the Psalm, indeed, yet another Divine response, exactly similar to this;

[1] "In the midst of my days!" It is not unlikely that the unparallelled pressure of the exercised spirit on the worn and enfeebled frame, had caused him to be prematurely old. This would account for such words as "I have been young, and now am old" (xxxvii. 25), and "to old age and gray hairs, forsake me not" (lxxi. 18). Dark hair has frequently been known to become wholly gray, even in a single night; under the influence of strong emotion. It is remarkable, that when his cavilling foes (John viii. 57), estimated his age (and their object was to prove him as young as possible), they named "fifty years."

viz. the words from vers. 12 to 22. If so, the Mourner is pointed forward to his future rebuilding of Zion, and the earthly Dominion, in the earlier; and then to his rebuilding of the New Heavens and the New Earth, in the later, Oracle. And if so, moreover, it may account for the introduction of the address, "O Lord (*i.e.* O Jehovah)!" at the beginning of the quotation;—which, in the Hebrew, does not occur here, though it occurs at verse 12.

We may thus, conjecturally, assign this affecting but glorious experience of Jesus to the period of the severe bodily sufferings, augmented by rancorous malice of enemies, and their foul false charges, and made far more poignant by the pressure of the Divine wrath against the sin with which He had identified himself;—which furnishes the theme of that dolorous Decade of Psalms just now considered. The period in question occupied, possibly, the last third of the thirty years of our Lord's præ-ministerial life.

There is one aspect of these inspired unveilings of the humbled Son of Man, which ought not to be left unnoticed; though I approach it with trembling hesitancy, as almost too awful to be touched. What was the nature of this terrible disease, this "thing of Belial," which was such an agony to himself, and formed such a handle to his bitter enemies?

There exists a very ancient tradition that the

Lord Jesus knew by personal experience that most terrific of inflictions,—Leprosy. In Psalm xxxviii. 11, he says, "My lovers and my friends stand aloof from my sore" [*stroke*, marg.]; and, in Psalm xxxix. 10, "Remove thy *stroke* away from me." In Isaiah liii. 8, "for the transgression of my people was the *stroke* upon him." Now the word *stroke* נֶגַע (*nehgang*), is one very specially appropriated to leprosy, in Hebrew usage: it occurs throughout Leviticus xiii., xiv., rend. *plague* in Auth. Vers. In Isaiah lii. 14,[1] we read, "Many were astonied: . . . his visage *was so marred* more than any man, and his form more than the sons of men." Was this marring of face and form no more than a vague expression for "a sorrowing and suffering Messiah" (Birks, *in loco*)? Or, if literal, no more than what the slaps on the face (ῥαπίσματα), and the crown of thorns, produced? Compare the image in Psalm xxxix. 11, "makest his beauty to consume away, as it were a *moth fretting a garment*" (version 1539), with the signs of leprosy in Leviticus xiii.

[1] "In the Talmud, *Cod. Sanhedrin*, to the question, What is the name of the Messiah? it is answered חיוורא, the Leper. And the reason given is that, in Isa. liii. 4, it is said, We did esteem him *stricken* נגוע. And because הנגע is used of the leprosy, in Lev. xiii. 13, they concluded his name to be a Leper." [Bp. Pearson, On the Creed: Art. iv. *Note b.*]

The Vulgate rendering of the same clause (Isa. liii. 4) is, "Nos putavimus eum, *quasi leprosum*, percussum à Deo, et humiliatum" (We thought him stricken by God, and humbled, as if leprous).

Even if the "loathsome" or "evil disease" is not to be understood literally, yet some grievous bodily disease seems implied in the complaint, twice repeated (xxxviii. 3, 7), that there is no soundness in his flesh; that (5) his wounds stink and are corrupt; and that (11) his lovers and friends stand aloof from his *stroke*. While, in xli., if the evil disease [*thing of Belial*] exists only in the slander of his enemies, still the fact that he "lieth down" on the "bed of languishing," the "bed of sickness" (3), and his trust that "Jehovah will keep him alive" (2), seem to put bodily disease beyond question. But not a hint of this is given in the Gospels.

Of course, if it was so, it was one of the penalties of sin, voluntarily borne for sinners' sake: and, while it adds a new poignancy to the fact that he was *in all points* compassed with infirmity (Heb. iv., v.), it elicits afresh our adoring praise and love, that he could *so* empty, and *so* humble himself (Phil. ii. 7, 8).

Amidst all, the Blessed Sufferer has full confidence that "Jehovah" will deliver him in the "day of evil" (xli. 2 *marg.*); will preserve and keep him alive (3); will raise him up, that he may requite [refute?] his foes (10). And Psalm xxx. is, throughout, the exultant song of praise for the recovery. (Cf. xxx. 3, 9, with cxliii. 7.)

XVI.

CHRIST IN THE PSALMS. III.

The Eternal Word, One with the Father, who thought it not robbery to be equal with God,—"emptied himself, taking the form of a slave, becoming in the likeness of men" (Phil. ii. 7). The order of the predicates intimates that the first step in this mighty descent was the Self-emptying (ἐκένωσε),—the practical putting-aside (if I may venture such a phrase) of his proper Godhead, for a while. The next, a consequence of the former, was the assumption of the bondman state; i.e., the state of one whose own will is subject to another's, replying to his Father's proposal, "Lo, I come *to do thy will*, O God!" Then follows the third step,—his manifestation in service. "When the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman" (Gal. iv. 4).

We infer, then, that, from the moment of his self-emptying, and his acceptance of the Father's proposal, the load of our guilt lay on the Son of God. Nor could it be lifted from Him, till He had wholly put it away by the sacrifice of himself. "The Lamb was slain from the foundation of the

world": and from this great Covenant-council onward, the Blessed Son was the bondman of the Father, nailed by the ear to the post of his door, bearing this heavy burden, without intermission, by anticipation. In this servile capacity He waited the Father's pleasure to determine the moment of incarnation; exercising no choice in the matter, himself. "Neither came I of myself; but He sent Me" (John viii. 42). "The Father, who sent Me, He gave Me a commandment, what I should say, and what I should speak" (John xii. 49). And, in a multitude of other passages, the same truth is asserted, that the Son's coming into the world was in self-renouncing service to the Father.

Again, since it is expressly said that God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, *made under* the law, it seems necessarily to follow that, at least from the instant of his conception by the Holy Ghost in the womb of the Virgin (if not long before this), He was under the sentence of the law. This descent and degradation from the highest glory of God to the status of a creature legally condemned, was already an immeasurable part of the satisfaction which He had engaged to render to the affronted Majesty of God;—already an important moiety of that vast debt, which Man was owing, and which He, the Son, had bound himself to repay, though He took it not away (Psa. lxix. 4); but which would be fully discharged only by his penal curse and death!

The penalty was due from "a great multitude that no man can number": and to each it was an infinite penalty; infinite, at least, in one aspect; *i.e.* of duration; existence in the lake of fire, protracted for ever and ever. The whole of the expiatory sufferings of the Surety, that lay between Gethsemane and the Resurrection, were of less than three days' duration. We are sure that Jehovah was well-pleased for his righteousness' sake. The demand was paid to the uttermost farthing. The Surety "was raised again *because* of our justification" (Rom. iv. 25).

The dignity conferred on the Manhood, by the union with it of Godhead, doubtless invested his sufferings with a value, which we have no power of estimating; so that, if we were sure that they were limited to those three days, or even to the three hours of Crucifixion, who would dare to say they were not sufficient? Yet, seeing that the Word had already made the immense descent from the Godhead to the Manhood; from the glory which He had with the Father to the Virgin's womb; and had passed three and thirty years in the emptied humbled condition; we may surely assume that these sacrifices formed payments of unspeakable value, to swell the sum.

By these considerations we may be aided in estimating, what yet must ever be inestimable,—the amount of glory which went-up into the Divine Treasury from the lowly Son of Man, every hour of those thirty years that preceded

his Baptism. Of this the only trace vouchsafed to us is in these Psalms.

The Holy Ghost says that the *obedience* of Christ avails for our righteousness (Rom. v. 19): and the words "becoming obedient until [μέχρι, *as far as*] death" (Phil. ii. 8), imply that his meritorious obedience, for which He has been so highly exalted as Head over all, did not begin with death; was not limited to death; but, having begun long before, viz. at the self-emptying, reached *as far as* death.

A great deal has been made of certain sufferings of our Lord, assumed to have been other than propitiatory. No doubt He suffered by association with Israel. Yet Israel was but *man;* man set in circumstances peculiarly favourable for the pleasing of God, yet having signally failed: man at his best (Isa. xl. 6), yet vanity! For "*Corruptio optimi pessima.*" Yet, if it had pleased the Father that His beloved Son's early days should be cast among Gentiles; if, for instance, the refuge in Egypt had been extended to the Manifestation;—his path, though different, would have been not less sorrowful. He would still have "endured the contradiction of sinners."

The Lord's aspirations, in some Psalms, do go out to the final restoration of Israel, their deliverance from the long "tribulation," his own appearing in glory, and his assumption of the Throne of David. Perhaps, however, "the remnant" has been accredited with allusions which

do not look so far into the future, but rather belong to the godly Galilean friends of Jesus, such as looked for Redemption (Luke ii. 25, 38 ; John i. 38–51) ; such as, in due time, became his disciples.

I hold that, under the righteous government of God, suffering, of any kind or degree, is impossible, save as the just wage of sin. But, since the Holy Child Jesus suffered bodily mutilation, loss of blood, and actual pain (Luke ii. 21), as soon as He came into the world ; and, since "in Him was no sin,"—of what was this suffering the wages, but of that "iniquity of us all, laid on Him, exacted, and for which he became answerable" (Isa. liii. 6, 7) ?

The Psalms reveal to us that the Holy One was vicariously bearing, throughout his life, the wrath of God in spirit, the enmity and reproach of man, and various pains of body, though all of these in varying measures, and probably with longer or shorter intermissions. The Father's personal complacency in Him, and his loving confidence in the Father, were in no sense inconsistent with vicarious enduring. As all suffering was the result of transgression, so every pang or loss He ever bore, He bore as our vicarious Substitute, as Second Adam ; and all must have been always connected by Him with the holy wrath of God. This wrath would press Him with varying intensity at different times, with a culmination of pressure at the Garden, and the Cross. But, I

think, even when He groaned under the wrath of God, He never lost sight of the love of the Father. The whole three years of his ministry seem to have formed one of the intervals of minished severity of pressure. After the temptation (Luke iv. 13), "the devil departed from Him *for a season*": perhaps till he came, as Prince of this world, in Gethsemane (cf. Luke xxii. 53; and John xiv. 30).

It has been asserted, though without the least attempt at Scriptural proof, that "Christ had never sickness or disease, like unto ours":—"all bodily as well as mental affections [qu. *aberrations*?] in *us* being more or less connected with indwelling sin." This is vague enough, to be sure: but such as it is, it is wholly unsupported by evidence. Of course they are the fruits of Adam's sin *imputed*. But this the Son of God took certainly on himself. And if the statement in Matthew viii. 17, "Himself bare our sicknesses (*νόσους*)," refers to the *fresh* labours imposed by the sunset crowds on him already wearied by the labours of that pregnant sabbath,—there is no real physical difference between weariness and rheumatism or paralysis. Disease is a certain alteration of the normal condition of certain organs: weariness, hunger, thirst are abnormal conditions of bodily organs, easily removed by rest, food, or drink; but, if not so removed, speedily becoming very patent and real forms of disease. Diseases may be sent as the direct

chastisement of sin (Acts xii. 23; 1 Cor. xi. 30; 1 John v. 16). But was the sickness, "nigh unto death" (Phil. ii. 27, 30) of Epaphroditus connected with *indwelling* (as distinct from imputed) *sin?*

We may see the whole thirty-three years of our Lord's life pictured in Isaac's walk up the mountain (Gen. xxii. 6). He was in perfect obedience to, and communion with, his father. As it is said, with reiterated emphasis, "they went both of them together." The burden of the wood was on his back all the way: presently he was bound; laid upon the altar; the fire was beside him; the knife gleamed before his eyes. All, surely, helped to constitute the sacrifice; though the actual death was averted.

So, the whole life of Jesus was a sacrifice, of which the consummation was not averted, but accomplished. The stable in which He began his acquaintance with this world; the manger in which He was laid; the pain of his first breath; his circumcision; Herod's plotting; the flight into Egypt; the poverty "for our sake" (2 Cor. viii. 9) of "Him who was rich"; his mean occupation; his weary trudging (doubtless on foot) from Galilee to Jerusalem, thrice every year (Exod. xxiii. 17):—all, all, helped to pay the "ten thousand talents" of our debt to God. Every suffering, the minutest, is a component part of death; and so, the wages of sin. In Him is no sin!

Abraham had never loved his son more, nor joyed in him more, than when he took the knife to slay him. So the Father's delight in Jesus was never for one moment interrupted, when the wrath unmingled overwhelmed Him; when the face of God was hidden from Him, officially, as sin. He was made sin, in order to do God's will. In the very "offering up of himself to God, *for us*," He was "to God a sweet-smelling savour" (Eph. v. 2). The voice of God, upon his baptism, that at the transfiguration, and that at Bethany two days before the Passover, were all in full harmony with the fact that He was all the time the vicarious Lamb. The wrath, the fierce anger, the hot displeasure, the deep waters, the mire where there was no standing, were all against the SIN, which He had made his, by voluntary imputation; but they left absolutely untouched, in the Father's esteem, the perfect loveliness of his Person.

We may thus pursue, with fearlessness, our researches into the Psalms; assured that we shall find nothing there of the experience of the "poor and needy man," the "meek and lowly in heart," whatever phase of his life be unveiled to us, but what will be found in perfect conformity with what is exhibited in the Gospels and Epistles; though there may well be additional details, particularly of his præ-ministerial years.

A large number of the Psalms, including

several apparently to be dated before his public Manifestation, contain earnest agonizing appeals to God, against some undefined, but terrible accusation, formally brought against him; the result of treacherous snares laid for him, but out of which he at length comes triumphant. The series of eighteen, from xxv.–xliii. *incl.* are very largely thus occupied. The false charge seems, in some inexplicable way, to be connected with the disease just noticed (xxxv. 11–13, 21, 25; xxxviii. 12; xxxix. 7–11; xli. 5–8).

There is one who seems the chief in this foul conspiracy (xxxv. 8, 10, 14); one who had been under special obligation to the persecuted One for sympathy and intercession, when *he* had been in affliction (12–14); this man (it seems the same) had been his familiar friend, had eaten of his bread (xli. 9): and Jesus anticipates that the pit which this treacherous false-friend had dug should, at unawares, catch himself (xxxv. 8).

Now, in the Gospel, this false-friend is identified, by the very text just cited, with Judas the traitor (John xiii. 18). Yet, as already shown, it seems impossible to refer Psalm xli. to the Supper, or near it. Is it possible that Judas had been at one time a neighbour of Jesus at Nazareth, and had been honoured with his confidence, which he had basely abused by heading popular hatred against Him, when under Jehovah's stroke? that, on Jesus's recovery, Judas

had professed deep penitence; perhaps ascribed his error to zeal for righteousness? and that, on the opening of the Ministry, he had been again trusted?[1]

The group of Psalms lii. to lix. may perhaps belong to the "six days before the Passover" (John xii. 1), which Jesus spent at Bethany, going in daily to Jerusalem. He mourns the violence and strife of the City; the wickedness in the midst; the deceit and guile that depart not from the streets (lv.): the hypocrisy and malice of a rich and powerful oppressor, perhaps the High-priest, Caiaphas (lii.): the majority of the Council, called expressly to destroy Him (liii., etc.): the treachery of Judas (lv.). He pleads his own integrity, and confidence in God (omn.): predicts speedy judgment on the guilty nation, awful and exemplary (lviii., lix.); the dispersion, consumption, and miserable condition, but *not destruction*, of the Jewish people (lix.); their helpless, unsatisfied longing and yearning for Jerusalem (6, 14); while treated by God as heathen. In cix. the sin and the doom of the traitor are vividly delineated. Yet even here,

[1] Jesus is said to "have known, *from the beginning*, who would betray Him." On this occasion, immediately on the beheading of John (cf. John vi. with Matt. xiv.), Jesus had designated Judas as a *devil*. Probably this was in the sense of false-accuser; as if already this; though unknown to the band. And when fully developed in crime, Jesus applies to him the still more terrible appellation, Son of Perdition.

verses 3–5 appear to recal the memory of the older treachery of xxxv.

The Calvary experiences of the Lord Jesus, presented in Psalms xxii. and lxix., are sufficiently familiar to all believers, from the patent parallelisms of word and fact. In the former, the taunts of the priests and scribes (7); the piercing of his hands and feet (16); the parting of his garments (18); and, above all, his dying cry (1):—in the latter, the gall and the vinegar (21); and the imprecation against Judas, mystically and personally (22–25); are all well-known. It may, however, be proper to notice the sudden and complete transition from the doleful agony to the joy and light of Resurrection (xxii. 21); "Save me from the lion's mouth, from the horns of the unicorns. THOU HAST HEARD ME!" Instantly he takes up the words cited in Hebrews ii. 12; and, turning to John xx. 17–19, we hear Him, just risen, sending a message to his "Brethren" (never before so called) declaring the Father's Name to them; and, immediately, leading the praise *in the midst* of the Church. The rest of the Psalm is his Resurrection Song; as is also, surely, Psalm cxviii., —an Ode well worthy of minute exegesis, in this aspect; and Psalm cxvi.

Psalm lxix. appears, until verse 21, to be retrospective. We hear nothing of the physical agony; but of the floods of the Divine wrath, and the cruel ingratitude of man. Of the latter,

Reproach is the prominent feature. We have some hints of this hateful baseness in the gospel histories; but we should never have known its depth, but for this Psalm. We could not have imagined that the poor and needy Man, as he walked through the back streets of Capernaum or Jerusalem, heard from the low drink-shops the song and the ribald roar of laughter; and, listening, found that He, the meek Nazarene, was the theme; that He "was the song of the Drunkards" (12)! He is so majestically calm and silent under the slanderous charges of his foes, that, but for this word (20), we should never have imagined that reproach had *broken his heart!*

To pursue, with any adequate fulness, these investigations, even with my poor ability, would demand a volume. But if any one, possessing the requisite scholarship (which I have not), critical acumen, logical precision, scriptural knowledge, soundness in the faith, chastened imagination, and, above all, without which all the rest would be of no value, loving loyalty to the Person of the Lord Jesus,—the Book of Psalms presents an inexhaustible mine of most precious and interesting truth, almost unexplored, almost unsuspected, as yet.

One word more. I most earnestly beg, that whatever of novel thought is in this Exposition may be regarded, not at all as dogmatically taught, but as tentatively suggested.

XVII.

PRIESTHOOD (Aaron).

The essential idea of a Priest, as we gather it from the Sacred Word, is that of a Mediator or Go-between; such as Job (ix. 32) craved,—"He is not a man that I might put him on his answer, that we might stand side by side in judgment. Oh that there were a Daysman (umpire, arbiter, μεσίτης, LXX.) between us, that could lay his hand upon us both!"

Perhaps from the very beginning of created existence, such mediation was essential between the Creator and the creature. "No one hath seen God at any time: the Only-begotten God . . He hath *declared* Him" (John i. 18). And the Son is called "the *Image* of the *invisible* God" (Col. i. 15); as if the Medium of presentation to us of what would otherwise be beyond the sphere of our faculties: sight, as the noblest of the senses, representing all. If so, the priesthood of the Son reaches into past Eternity; far, far beyond the sacrificial phase. And since, on the Throne, He is a "Priest *to* everlasting" (Psa. cx. 4), so is He a Priest *from* everlasting: and a new

light breaks on the fact adduced (Heb. vii. 3) that Melchizedek "has no more beginning of days, than end of life."

When the Levitical priesthood was appointed, as a shadow of things to come, the same idea of mediation was visible, though very feebly represented, in one aspect. "For every High-priest, taken from among men, is ordained on behalf of men, in their dealings with God" (Heb. v. 1). The prominent aspect here is the capacity of Aaron to lay his hand upon *Man*, being himself a man, "compassed with infirmity." To aid (but still imperfectly) the Divine side of such a priest, Moses is conjoined with Aaron; standing, even in Egypt, more directly in the place of God (Exod. iv. 16); and, in the wilderness, not only receiving from Jehovah and speaking with Him "face to face," but having, apparently, unrestricted access even to the Glory in the Tabernacle (Exod. xxxiii. 9; Num. i. 1; vii. 89), at all times. And in Psalm xcix. 6, Moses and Aaron are coupled as among Jehovah's priests.

This Levitical Priesthood is the type which is most familiar to us; which is inseparable from *sacrifice*. It is not the primal, nor will it be the permanent, type. It owes its existence to Sin, which is no original element in the creation of God, but a dreadful accident which has been superimposed on it, with results deplorable, indeed, but transitory; since God has found means to put it out of his sight. The day

hasteth greatly, when "there shall be no more curse" (Rev. xxii. 3).

The Divine object, in instituting the Blood-sacrifices which the Aaronic priests offered, was, first, to bring sin to remembrance (Heb. x. 3): then, to exhibit its penalty, that "without shedding of blood is no remission" (ix. 22); and finally, to present, through these shadows, a coming One, who, by His penal death once suffered, should at length put it so away, that (x. 17) "it should be remembered no more." The Tabernacle was (in shadow) the presence-chamber of the All-holy God, where He manifested forth his glory. "In thy presence is fulness of joy" (Psa. xvi. 11); but "the path of life,"—"the way into the Holiest—was not yet thrown open" (Heb. ix. 8); though, by the Priest's access, once a year, hope was given that, by-and-by, man would be brought nigh;—many sons be brought to glory.

Of old, even before the expulsion from Eden, this blood-sprinkled way had been indicated; but no priesthood for reconciliation. The patriarchs had their altars, and their life-sacrifices; but they do not seem to have been priests: each drew nigh to God through blood, and worshipped; but no mediation for others appears. Abraham's intercession for Sodom is not connected with sacrifice. Job, however, was a real priest, presenting, with "filled hand," ascending offerings on behalf of his sons (Job i.

5), and this *continually*. So, before the election to office of Aaron, certain "young men offered burnt offerings and peace-offerings" (Exod. xxiv. 5).

But it is from the house of Aaron that we must learn the great truths which God conveys to us about Priesthood. First, he was chosen by God. "No man taketh this honour to himself, but he that is called of God, as was Aaron" (Heb. v. 4; Exod. xxviii. 1). Then he was anointed (xxix. 7). The holy anointing-oil, made of sweet spices elaborately compounded (xxx. 22–25), was poured upon Aaron, till it "ran down upon his beard, and reached to the skirts of his garments" (Psa. cxxxiii. 2); typical of the Holy Spirit given by the Father, without measure (John iii. 34) to the Son, thus constituting Him the Christ (*i.e.* anointed).[1] There can be no true priesthood,

[1] Darby (*Syn. Bib.* p. 85) asserts that "Aaron was anointed separately, without sacrifice, without blood: but his sons were sprinkled with blood upon the ear, the thumb, . . the great toe. . . And then they were sprinkled with blood, and with the oil of consecration." And in a marg. note, this is again emphasized as a difference; and spiritualized, as if indicating the anointing of Christ "while on earth; his disciples after his death."

But, if my exegesis of Christ's Baptism (see *supra*: p. 54) is not mistaken, his anointing with the Holy Ghost, and that of his House, the Church in Him, were one; and were consequent on his death and resurrection (Matt. iii. 16). While here, in the speaking type, Aaron is touched with blood on his organs, and sprinkled

where the Spirit of God is not. Then, before the Priest can perform his function of offering, "his hands must be filled" (Exod. xxix. 9; 29; *et pass.*; *marg.*). Doubtless this suggested that whatever can be rendered to God by man, is God's already, and comes from Him. As David well said, when seeking blessing for Solomon (1 Chron. xxix. 14), "all things come from Thee, and of thine own have we given Thee." So our Blessed Lord's Priesthood is wholly the appointment and gift of the Father for us (Heb. v. 5, 6); as are all the graces of his Person, which make the priestly service precious.

The work of the Aaronic Priest was to bring man into the presence-chamber of the Holy One. But man was already guilty, vile, sentenced, banished: and must, as we have seen, suffer death,—in person, or in substitute. The only possible, but sufficient Substitute God himself had provided,—the Blood of his own Son, *as Victim*, to be in due time shed, and then carried by the same Blessed Son, *as Priest*, within the Holiest. The Ordinance of the Day of Atonement,—the tenth day of the seventh month—(Lev. xvi.), was the grand centre around which the whole Mosaic economy revolved. The goat

with blood on his person and garments,—exactly as, and together with, his sons (Exod. xxix. 20, 21). Christ's entering in once into the Holiest (Heb. ix. 12) was surely as High-priest: and this is expressly said to have been "by his own blood."

chosen for the Sin-offering, with its double personality, having been slain and burned without the camp, as an accursed thing fit only for hell-fire,—its blood, the expression of its life penally taken, was put into Aaron's hands. With this, having first covered the Mercy-seat with a cloud of fragrant incense, emblem of the inherent preciousness of the Blessed One, who yet was even then bearing Curse for Sin,—he entered within the veil. As he entered he sprinkled the Blood of the Sin-offering "on the Mercy-seat, eastward, and before the Mercy-seat";—that is, since the door of the Tabernacle faced the east,—between the Glory of God and the people outside the door. This sprinkling *eastward* had a very precious significance; for the wrath of the Most Holy God could not blaze forth against the worshippers, without crossing the Blood. Exactly as the destroying Angel, on the Passover night, was barred from entering any house on whose door the guarding Blood was sprinkled.

But, though the goat which was made sin has drained its life-blood, and had its body consumed with fire, it has yet an important part to perform. Hence the second, "the *live* goat," which must be looked on as but the same over again; because it was not possible that one individual creature could do all that was required in this grand acted parable. Aaron now solemnly lays his hands on the head of this goat, and "confesses over him all the iniquities of the children

of Israel, . . putting them on the head of the goat." Here is the official transfer of guilt from the sinners to the Sin-bearer: the goat (in type) is now made Sin, publicly, before God and man, and that by God's own ordinance. Now, what is to be done with the sin, the guilt, so transferred to the substitute? He has already (in his other personality) suffered the extreme penalty of death: now he must carry the sin away out of God's recognition, into "a land of separation," whence it can never come into the Judge's cognizance any more (Jer. l. 20; Heb. x. 17).

Thus, then, the alienated people are reconciled to God; and by their Priest (even in his person) are brought within the veil into the presence of the Glory of God, with acceptance. And now their homage, their gifts, their service,—which but for all this would have been an abomination, —can be presented to God and received by Him with an infinite complacency. For Aaron instantly offers, on the Brazen Altar, the Burnt-offering for the people, which wholly ascends before God, as a sweet savour. As the result of the perfect acceptance of the sweet savour offerings, "Moses and Aaron (Lev. ix. 23) went into the Tabernacle, and came out and blessed the people. And the Glory of Jehovah appeared unto all the people."

Of all this ceremonial the great value is the shadow that it cast of good things to come.

The loving purpose realized at the End of all things, "Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men; and He will dwell with them, and they shall be his people; and God himself shall be with them, their God" (Rev. xxi. 3),—was distinctly and verbally held out to Israel (Lev. xxvi. 11); yet as future, and contingent on their obedient response to all Jehovah's love. Thus it was only *shadowed* in the "worldly sanctuary," and all its ordinances of that Dispensation.

God's holy jealousy for the honour of his Beloved Son was shown by repeated interpositions in this matter of Priesthood. "I will be sanctified in them that come nigh Me; and before all the people I will be glorified" (Lev. x. 3). Again, "God is greatly to be feared in the assembly of the Saints, and to be had in reverence of all them that are round about Him" (Psa. lxxxix. 79). It is repeated, to the honour of Moses, "faithful in all God's House," and that with what seems, to the careless reader, a needless and tedious reiteration,—in the details of the ordinances of priestly worship, that "he did as Jehovah commanded Moses." For, in approaching God, everything is prescribed: nothing is left to the sinner's choice: no room is there for man's will, ingenuity, power. In drawing nigh to God, surely, "the flesh profiteth nothing" (John vi. 63).

Aaron had four sons. The eldest two, Nadab and Abihu, were cut off by the Divine judgment

(Lev. x. 1), almost immediately on their appointment. They had been duly set apart, clothed, anointed, sprinkled; their hands had been duly filled: they were true priests. Yet, under the excitement of strong drink (Lev. x. 9), they presumed to do "before Jehovah what He commanded them not." Jehovah's ordinance was that for the burning of the incense before Him, coals of fire should be taken from the Brazen Altar, where the sacred fire, for the consuming of the lamb for the Burnt-offering, morning and evening, daily (Exod. xxix. 38), was continually burning, having been kindled by his own glory (Lev. ix. 24; xvi. 12). For this represented the entire devotion of Christ to the Father, wholly consumed for God, and wholly accepted of Him (John viii. 29). But they, in their self-will, sought "strange fire"; fire which had no relation to the whole Burnt-offering: and the Holiness of God, "a consuming Fire," blazed forth against them and devoured them; "and they died from before Jehovah."

Even the incense of adoration, praise, and prayer, is abomination, if presented apart from Christ Jesus: a solemn fact, which is fatal to much that passes under the name of religion.

In the rebellion of Korah (Num. xvi.), the majesty of Jehovah was still more deeply affronted,—the specific distinctive priesthood of Christ being arrogantly denied,—and still more signally avenged. Korah was a near kinsman

of Aaron: and, as a Levite, had been highly honoured with service in the Sanctuary. This ought to have elicited lowly self-negation and thankful praise. *But ministry is not priesthood* (Num. xvi. 9, 10). Korah was the head and front of the insurrection; the sin in him was of the blackest dye, because it was ingratitude against the highest grace (ver. 8).

The sons of Reuben, with a somewhat lower measure of guilt, seem to have counted on their natural privilege of birthright:—theirs was the pre-eminence of the first-born tribe: and, with them, the two hundred and fifty nameless Princes of the Assembly, "famous in the Congregation," indeed, "men of renown"; but with no specific claim to priestly honours, presumed to seize by mere human will and brute force, the high dignity of drawing nigh to the All-holy God. Thus, impelled by various motive thoughts, all agreed in rejecting the sole priesthood of Aaron, divinely selected, and in trampling on the revealed will of Jehovah.

So, very early in the history of the professing Church, men claimed to elevate certain conditions of ministry into distinctive priesthood, not only arrogating the title of Clergy, as if they alone were God's Heritage (*τοῦ Θεοῦ ὁ κλῆρος*: *see* 1 Pet. v. 3), but assuming the exclusive right to draw nigh to Him as mediating priests, and to dispense his mysteries:—all without the least warrant from the Sacred Word, but wholly of

self-will, and in defiance of the solemn prophetic warning (Jude 11).

Swift and terrible judgment avenged the holiness of the Great King. But the apostasy was wide-spread, and deep-seated. Godlessness was not limited to a few prominent leaders; the "people loved to have it so." The judgment threatened them also. But the very Priest whom they had despised and maligned interposed: "he stood between the dead and the living; and the plague was stayed" (ver. 48). So mercy rejoiced against judgment.

And now Jehovah interposes with a miraculous manifestation, not of wrath, but of grace; in order finally to settle beyond dispute this question of priesthood; "to make to cease the murmurings of the children of Israel." Not only is the Priesthood to be limited to God's own choice; but a new aspect is to be given to it: it must be in Resurrection: to be really effective, it must be exercised "according to the power of an endless life" (Heb. vii. 16).

Twelve rods, representative of the Tribes, are chosen and laid in the Tabernacle. In the morning they are examined. Whereas all had been alike dead sticks, lo! one of them, an Almond[1] twig, has revived out of the night of

[1] The name of the Almond, in Hebrew, is שָׁקֵד, *shaked*, the *early-waker*, the *hastener*. In Jer. i. 11, 12, there is a play upon the word, which is lost to the English reader. The Prophet sees an Almond rod; a *hastener*.

death, and is already full of life, and beauty, and fruit. This revived Rod bears the name of Aaron, God's chosen priest; and now, having been exhibited to the people, in order to silence their cavillings,—it is taken again into the Sanctuary. In the Holiest of all it is laid beside the Mercy-seat, to be kept in immortal life and beauty—for we cannot suppose that it would again dry-up and die, in *that Presence*—a perpetual token of resurrection-life in Him who alone can represent sinners before the Face of God.

This, however, was not yet to be made manifest. Life and Immortality could not yet be brought to light. The retirement and secretion of the revived Rod within the veil, hidden from human eyes, except the Priest's own, would cause the Divine interposition to fade from thought, as a mystery known only to devout and earnest searchers; awaiting the time unknown, when Jehovah, at length "would bring forth his Servant, The BRANCH."

For the perpetuity of an Endless Life, secured by resurrection, carries us far beyond Aaron, and belongs properly to another Type, as well as another Order, of Priesthood.

Jehovah says, "Thou hast well seen; for I will *hasten* [or *waken*] my word, to perform it!"

XVIII.

PRIESTHOOD (Melchizedek).

The first recorded War with its results, appears to be typical of the last with its results. The battle of "four kings with five" (Gen. xiv. 9) seems to look onward to Armageddon (Rev. xvi. 16); if it does not rather expand so as to embrace, in its foreshadowing, the conflicts of the whole "Times of the Gentiles," during which the debased People of Israel,—represented by selfish and earthly Lot, carried captive,—have been in bondage. Abram's sudden interposition, at midnight, with his 318 servants born in his house, all trained and armed, and his slaughter of the kings,—suggest the great Treading of the Winepress, without the City, the burden of so many prophecies. For the immediate sequent of that great Judgment will be the deliverance of Israel:—"The Day of Vengeance is in my heart, and the Year of my Redeemed is come" (Isa. lxiii.) And also, which may probably be only another picture of the same great final victory,—the going-forth of the Word of God, with the Armies in heaven following Him (Rev.

xix. 11–21), to prepare "the supper of the great God."

For now Melchizedek appears; and the victorious Warrior gives place to the Royal Priest. The two august personages are but two aspects of the one Son of God; the "Priest upon his Throne; the counsel of peace" to be henceforth "between Them both" (Zech. vi. 13).

Viewed as an actor in the history of the time, an impenetrable obscurity surrounds this mysterious Person. He is seen for a moment only, like a flash of lightning in a dark night; and no allusion is again made to him for a thousand years. "Without father, without mother, without lineage, without beginning of days, without end of life, made like unto the Son of God, he remains a Priest unto perpetuity." Such is the Holy Ghost's delineation of him (Heb. vii. 3). And, on the same authority, his name is a compound mystery of titles. For Melech (מֶלֶךְ) is King, and Zedek (צֶדֶק) is righteousness, and Salem (שָׁלֵם) is peace. Thus we have One who is King of Righteousness, and King of Peace.

The Jerusalem Targum (*in loco*) says boldly, that he was Shem, and that Salem was Jerusalem. But Shem's lineage, parentage, birth and death were recorded. And what was long afterwards called Jerusalem, was, if indeed at that time existing, a Jebusite town, of no significance. And if this Royal Priest was really a petty prince of one of the Canaanite tribes, accursed and

soon to be extirpated, it seems strange that God should have separated Abram from his own country, and given the land of Canaan to him and to his seed, for the purpose of preserving true religion; seeing that there was already one exercising authority in that land, who in his relation to the Most High God, was very far higher than Abram: as the Holy Ghost elaborately proves (Heb. vii. 4, 7, 9).

By his being without parents, without lineage, without beginning, and without end, of life,—is no more meant (ver. 3), than that these are not recorded? There would be nothing strange in such an omission: but the perpetuity of Melchizedek's life rests on better grounds than such silence; it is distinctly asserted; and that formally, as one of the arguments for his superiority to the Aaronic priests. "And *here* dying men receive tithes; but *there* he of whom it has been witnessed that he liveth" (ver. 8). "Witnessed"! *i.e.* by the Spirit's own testimony, surely, to the fact: a very different thing from an inference built on silence!

I conclude, then, notwithstanding confessed difficulties, that Melchizedek was one of the numerous appearances of the Eternal Word, vouchsafed to the Patriarchs, which, without being actual incarnations, were anticipations of his Incarnation.

This immortal life is the one salient attribute that distinguishes Melchizedek from Aaron; and

makes him the Head of an Order of Priesthood differing from the Order of Aaron. The grand inspired comment of the Apostle (Heb. vii., viii.), to which we are indebted for all our knowledge of the matter, turns almost wholly on this point.

If Melchizedek's Order of Priesthood is distinct from the Aaronic Order, so is his Type distinct from the Aaronic Type. Order and Type are quite separate ideas: let us not confound them. A thousand years after this patriarchal scene, Jehovah says to the ascended Son (anticipating yet a thousand years more), "Sit Thou at my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool. . . . Jehovah hath sworn, and will not repent, Thou art a Priest for ever, after the Order of Melchizedek!" (Psa. cx. 1–4.) Jesus was, is still, a Priest after the *type* of Aaron; but was never after the *Order* of Aaron. *Type* is a shadowing forth, in certain positions and conditions, of something like, but on a greater scale, and on a higher level, which is to be developed after. *Order* is the direct lineal succession, or perpetuation, of one person, the head of a line. Abiathar and Zadok were of the Order of Aaron, in David's day. Our Lord (Heb. vii. 14) sprang out of Judah, not Levi; and so could not be of Aaron's Order. Yet all the details of priesthood, in Exodus, Leviticus, and Numbers, on which we have lately been dwelling; and, particularly, the invaluable summary of the Holy Ghost in Hebrews ix., show that

Jesus was the substance of all those typical shadows.

The Tabernacle represented his uncreated sphere of service (ver. 11); the beautiful Veil, his flesh,[1] with its thousand perfections (x. 20); the anointing Spirit was given to Him without measure; the Incense betokened the Father's delight in his person; He entered into the Holiest with his own blood (ix. 12), shed without the camp (xiii. 11–13), which He has sprinkled on the Mercy-seat (xii. 24; 1 Pet. i. 2). As the great substance of these shadows, He has obtained eternal redemption for us (Heb. ix. 12); so that we who believe have now perfect freedom, —boldness,—to enter into the presence of God[2] at all times (x. 19–22; Eph. iii. 12).

[1] At the instant that Jesus yielded his spirit "the veil of the Temple was rent in twain *from the top to the bottom*" (Matt. xxvii. 51). This *course* of the rent, begun at the top, indicated that it was God's work; since, if man had rent it, he would have begun *at the bottom*. Thus God taught that, at that moment, all distinction between the Inner Chamber and the outer world ceased: what had been the Holiest of all was now a common place.

The priests, no doubt, mended the rent, so neatly that human eyes could detect no fault; but, in God's esteem, the sacredness had ceased; and the Holiest was thenceforth in Heaven itself (Heb. ix. 12, 24; x. 19).

[2] In the A.V. at Hebrews x. 21, we read "having an high-priest," but in the original it is ἱερέα μέγαν, a *great* priest, a term which does not occur elsewhere in the N.T. For though the LXX. use the word μέγας, conveying accurately the Hebrew גָּדוֹל, *gadōl*, in all the

Yet, as regards the House of Israel, his earthly inheritance, the Priest is still hidden within the veil. Though an elect nation, they have not yet looked on Him whom they pierced: they have not yet laid their hands on the head of the Sin-offering (Lev. xvi. 21): the Fountain for sin (Zech. xii. 10; xiii. 1) has not yet been "opened to the House of David and the inhabitants of Jerusalem." But, soon, "the veil which is upon their heart being taken away" (2 Cor. iii. 15, 16), He will come forth, like Aaron (Lev. ix. 22), and bless them in the Name of Jehovah.

But the opening of access to God by putting out of his sight the guilt of his "many sons";—the admission of worshippers to serve with acceptance (Heb. xii. 28);—is the beginning of a new Type of Priesthood; and Aaron's lifting-up his hand toward the People and blessing them; and then Moses and Aaron's retiring into the Tabernacle, and coming out, and again blessing them; immediately followed by the Glory of Jehovah appearing to all the People, and by the

occurrences (but few) of the equivalent in the O.T.;—yet the N.T. always uses *ἀρχιερεύς* (and the occurrences are many) except here. Hebrews iv. 14 has both words. In x. 21 the distinction is not between the high-priest, who might lift the veil, and the common priests who were limited to the outer chamber. We are accounted members of his Body, and enter with Him. Ours is, in fact, a high-priestly place; on the same level as his: though, in all things, He has the pre-eminence;—He is "Great Priest."

Divine Fire consuming on the Altar the burnt-offerings and the fat (Lev. ix. 21–24),—may be considered as the transition from one Type to another.

The essential character of Aaron's priesthood was Atonement: it was specifically for Redemption; for Reconciliation. It was made necessary by the incoming of Sin, which had alienated the creature from his loving Creator, making man the enemy of God. There was no possible way of removing this bar to communion, but by death: "without shedding of blood is no remission." The entire body of life-sacrifices,—"the Body of the Moses" (Jude 9),—was ordained to show how Christ would, at length "make peace by the blood of his Cross" (Col. i. 20).

When this is wholly accomplished; i.e., "where remission of these [sins and iniquities] is, there is no more offering for sin" (Heb. x. 18). The Aaronic type of priest now ceases, of necessity; for his work is done, his occupation gone.[1]

[1] Unless it be merely commemorative. From the latest chapters of Ezekiel, which appear to predict a condition subsequent to the full reconciliation of Israel (xxxix. 25–29), we may infer a continuance of Priests of the House of Aaron, who shall offer sacrifices of blood, both sin-offerings and sweet-savour offerings (xliii. 18–27). Yet, as the sin-offerings seem not to be protracted beyond the first seven days of consecration, while the burnt-offerings are to go on from the Eighth day and forward; this may be but the palpable transition to the

When Melchizedek appears, there is no recognition of sin as a barrier to confidential intercommunication between God and man. He is "Priest of the Most High God"; and he blesses Abram "from the Most High God, Possessor of heaven and earth." This is a remarkable Divine title; quite unique, save that it is instantly adopted by Abram (Gen. xiv. 22), in declining the King of Sodom's bounty. It is itself highly significant, and suggestive of the period when Christ "shall have *brought back* the dominion to God the Father" (1 Cor. xv. 24);—when, Satan's usurpation having been put-down, God shall be not only Owner, but actual Possessor, unchallenged, of heaven and earth. Then, first, blessing goes forth from the Most High to Abram, through Melchizedek, who brings forth bread and wine for his refresh-

Melchizedek type. And this view seems to receive confirmation from an earlier promise (xx. 41), in which Jehovah, looking forward to the National Restoration of Israel, says, "In the mountain of the height of Israel . . there shall all the House of Israel, all of them, in the Land, serve Me: there will I accept them, and there will I require your offerings, and the first-fruits of your oblations, with all your holy things. I will accept you with your sweet savour." Here there is no mention of atonement, or propitiatory offerings; but *only* of sweet-savour offerings.

Or,—since death seems, from several passages, contemplated,—it may be that all this is but Millennial; and that, not till the Post-millennial Era, will Creation be brought into Melchizedek blessing.

ment; recalling such precious promises as those in Luke xii. 37; xxii. 30; Matthew xxvi. 29; Revelation iii. 20. And, secondly, blessing [praise, thanksgiving] is rendered by Melchizedek to the Most High God on behalf of Abram. And, thirdly, Abram gives to Melchizedek, for God, the tenth of the spoils.

Now, since sin was no essential part of humanity, but an accident that had befallen it, when this has been so effectually put away, that God will remember it no more (Heb. x. 17), humanity remains in the glorified Elect, but without sin. "Christ, having been *once* offered to bear the sins of many, will be seen, a second time, by them who are looking-out for Him, unto Salvation, without sin" (ix. 28): *i.e.*, without making any recognition of sin, or any provision for it. Thus the whole system of the Aaronic type of priesthood, of which righteous eradication of sin from the sinner was the very essence;—and this, as exercised, not only by Aaron and his successors, in *shadow*, but by Christ himself in *substance*,—will have ceased, at his assumption of his own Throne.

He now enters on the exercise of his Priesthood after the Melchizedek *type*. Receiving from God all possible Blessing for reconciled man, He returns, from man to God, full homage, love, devotion, obedience, service, praise: this blissful interchange now going-on, without interruption, for evermore.

Yet, as I above intimated, this Blessing-type, though new in the life-history of the creature, will be no new thing in the experience of the Priest. It will be a resumption of that most gracious, most precious office, which the Word had executed before the world was. Glimpses of this are afforded in the Scriptures;—such as the part which Wisdom personate (Prov. viii.) claims in relation to the habitable earth, and to the sons of men: such as "the grace given us in Christ Jesus" (2 Tim. i. 9); and "the eternal life promised" (Tit. i. 2);—"before eternal times."

And when our Great Priest resumes priesthood of this type, and begins to exercise it, it will never again be interrupted. For, in the first place, He is declared to be a Priest *for ever;* and this on the awful sanction of Jehovah's Oath (Psa. cx. 4); as the Holy Ghost emphasizes (Heb. vii. 20–22). And, secondly, it is after the Order of Melchizedek, which, with a profuse wealth of reasoning, that bespeaks the exceeding importance of the subject, He shows to consist mainly in unchangeableness. "They, truly [the Aaronic priests] were many priests, because they were not suffered to continue, by reason of death: but this One, because He continueth ever, hath an unchangeable [untransferrible] Priesthood" (23, 24). And yet again, thirdly, because it is in Resurrection-life. The Law, if it had been perfectly obeyed, could but have perpetuated the Adamic life in an earthly Paradise. The first

man was from the earth, clayey" (χοϊκός); and "as is the clayey, such are they also that are clayey" (1 Cor. xv. 47, 48). But Resurrection, as we have seen, lifts man into a new, a super-heavenly sphere of being (48, 49), beyond the possibility of death. "For the Law constituted men high priests, who have infirmity; but the Word of the Oath, . . constituteth the Son, perfected[1] for evermore" (Heb. vii. 28). "For there is, on the one hand, a disannulling of the commandment going before [*i.e.*, the established Aaronic order], because of its weakness and worthlessness [for the Law perfected no one); and, on the other hand, an introduction of a better hope" (18, 19).

We note, also, that this Order of Priesthood is bestowed on the Son, after his Ascension. Jehovah has already called Him to his right hand in the Majesty of the Heavens. He says, "Sit Thou at my Right Hand," before He says, "Thou art a Priest for ever!" Thus Jesus is a Royal Priest,—another important aspect in which He bears the Melchizedek impress. And this two-fold dignity had been, in a magnificent prophecy, assigned by Jehovah of Hosts to the Man who is his Fellow, saying, "Behold the Man whose name is THE BRANCH: and He shall grow up out of his place; and He shall build the Temple, of Jehovah. Even He shall build the Temple of

[1] For the meaning of "perfected," see p. 79 *et seq. supra*.

Jehovah; and He shall bear the glory, and shall sit and rule upon his Throne. And He shall be a Priest upon his Throne: and the counsel of peace shall be between Them both" (Zech. vi. 12). By virtue of our living oneness with the risen Christ, believers share this double dignity. "Ye are a royal priesthood" (1 Pet. ii. 9). "Jesus Christ . . hath made us a kingdom; priests to his God and Father" (Rev. i. 6; cf. v. 10).

But is this honour distinctive of ministers? Not at all: it is the common, equal privilege of all saints, even the humblest. And where is it exercised? Only in the Heavens (Heb. iv. 14; vii. 26). Our sphere of *service*, indeed, is on the earth; but our priesthood is with Him, who is in the Superheavenlies (Eph. ii. 6). I can imagine nothing that affixes the brand of falsehood on the pretension to a distinctive priesthood exercised on earth, more decisively than the words of the Holy Ghost concerning our Great Priest himself (Heb. viii. 4);—"If He were on earth, He would not be a Priest."

XIX.

PRIESTHOOD (Jesus).

One important function of priesthood is Intercession or Advocacy;—the pleading before God on behalf of those whom the Priest represents. Intercession is not invariably, not necessarily, priestly. Counsel, in our Courts of Justice, plead on behalf of their clients, labouring to magnify and make prominent the good points, and to palliate, or cover, the evils, in their causes. Similar pleading is frequent in ordinary life,—friend for friend with another friend; a kind patron on behalf of "the poor and him that hath no helper"; a mother for a child, to avert punishment. But we cannot call these priestly acts, though they help us to apprehend this aspect of priesthood. Abraham's intercession for Sodom (Gen. xviii.), lovely and beautiful as it was, was scarcely priestly, save in a very loose sense; and the same may be said of Paul's Epistle to Philemon, on behalf of Onesimus.

But it is adduced by the Holy Ghost (Heb. vii. 25), as a specific object of Christ's Melchizedek Priesthood, and as if inseparable from it, not ceasing with the cessation of sin: an

advocacy whose perpetuity is co-eval with his own eternal life. "Wherefore He is able to save them to the uttermost [to the end of all things] that come unto God by Him, seeing He ever liveth to make intercession on behalf of them." [1]

In the Aaronic type this intercession appears to have been represented by the sweet Incense, compounded of fragrant spices (Exod. xxx. 34), which was burned, morning and evening, on the Golden Altar before the Veil, by living coals of fire taken from the Altar of Burnt-offering; and was also carried within the Veil, so as to fill the Holiest, whenever Aaron entered there, under the threatened penalty of death, in case of failure (Lev. xvi. 13). In the symbolic presentation of the Superheavenlies (Rev. iv., v.) the Elders and Living Ones have "bowls full of Incense, which is the prayers of the saints"; and, later in the Prophecy, "an Angel,"—the Covenant-Angel, surely,—has "a censer of much Incense, which He adds to the prayers of all the saints, upon the Golden Altar, before the Throne" (viii. 3). The incense, in this case, was "given to Him, in order that He might offer it"; but,

[1] The last clause of Isaiah liii. would perhaps be better rendered "*made interposition*," or "*interposed himself*"; referring rather to Messiah's atonement for the guilty than to his advocacy for his redeemed; to substitution, rather than deprecation. This would be in accord, not only with the preceding clause, but with the whole chapter, in which priestly intercession has no place.

in the former case, the crowned Elders and Living Ones offer it to the Lamb. Perhaps because they represent the Royal Priesthood (see ver. 10),[1] the Lamb himself not being depicted in a priestly character, in this scene.

Yet it remains true that "He ever liveth for such intercession on our behalf." Oh if we might be privileged to know after what manner He intercedes! If we might be caught up, like Paul, to the third heaven, and listen, but for a single hour, to the Great Priest presenting the saints to the Father, covered with a cloud of much incense! Is such an aspiration hopeless? No: blessed be God, such privilege is ours! we have this marvellous favour, of being interested listeners, while He, the accepted and anointed Son, Priest for ever after the order of Melchizedek, whom the Father heareth always, holds the Father's ear on our behalf!

[1] If we refer to chap. i. 6,—"*καὶ ποιήσαντι ἡμᾶς*,"—carefully noting the parallellism of the *contexts* of both passages, it seems hard to avoid the conclusion that the kings and priests are, in each case, the saints of this dispensation, redeemed, by the Blood of the Lamb, out of every nation, and washed from sin in the same blood. To suppose that, in one of these passages, the superheavenly saints are meant, and, in the other, the earthly Israel, seems to me monstrous; merely because of certain solecisms in grammar, in a book full of solecisms, and difficult constructions. Note, moreover, that those who have part in the First Resurrection "reign with Christ," and are "priests of God and of the Christ" (xx. 4, 6);—Priests upon Thrones, all!

We open John xvii.; a chapter of exceeding preciousness! The Son of God is the speaker; himself the Truth: He knows what is due from the creature to the Creator; his sympathy with the Father is perfect. And his eyes are as a flame of fire: He needs not that any should testify of man, for He knows what is in man. He speaks, at length, about men,—men full of failure, of weakness, of perversity,—such as He has often had occasion to rebuke sternly. Is it possible that He will not discuss these faults with his Righteous Father? Yet, marvellous to say, not one single allusion to one single fault, in them, occurs in his whole address.

His public testimony had closed. "Though He had done so many miracles before [the nation], yet they believed not on Him" (xii. 37): and so, the awful doom of blindness, judicially pronounced eight centuries before, from the midst of adoring Seraphim (39–41; cf. Isa. vi.), is sealed upon the Nation. Jesus "departed, and did hide himself from them."

Then He is "in the midst of his brethren,"—the sons of God given to Him. And, for four chapters (xiii. to xvi.), He opens to them his heart of love in a way as yet unprecedented; comforting them in their anticipated orphanhood; unfolding the Father's love; promising them the Holy Ghost; revealing to them their separation from the world; their witness for Him; their tribulations; and his own return to

take them to Himself in the Father's House. And then, lifting up his eyes to heaven, in their hearing, with this most blessed prayer of intercession, he lays his beloved ones in the Father's bosom. And then the Garden. And then the Cross.

I have called this address to God priestly; and no instructed Christian can study it without recognizing that it certainly has this character. The presentation to God the Father, by the Son, —on the formal ground of his finished work, and of the glory redounding to God therefrom,—of such as had been far off and enemies, but are, now, accepted as dear children,—this is of the very essence of priesthood.

Yet such a conclusion seems palpably to contradict the Spirit's axiom (Heb. viii. 4) ;—"If He were on earth, He would not be a priest." But it does so only in appearance; not in reality: for the Lord, having closed his public ministry, and entered on his last twenty-four hours in flesh, takes his place, in spirit, beyond the Cross and the Grave, standing before the Father, *as if* in his resurrection-newness of life. That this is so, is manifest, from his own language. "The hour is come!" (1.) "I have finished the work" (4). "I am no more in the world" (11). "I come to Thee" (11, 13). "While I *was* with them in the world" (12). Moreover, not only does He distinctly take a place and a status beyond this world, but He reveals the reason

why He thus overleaps the brief interval. It was a most gracious reason: it was expressly that they (*and we*, 20) should reap all the fulness of joy, which the knowledge of his intercession is fitted to give. "And these things I speak in the world, in order that they may have my joy filled to the full in them" (13). "*In the world*"; a sphere where normally and actually this intercession has no place.

In his conference with them only a few minutes before, He had said, "It is *expedient for you* that I go away" (xvi. 7): and this was the truth in a large and important sense; since, except in his absence, the Holy Ghost could not come to them; and without this, they could not be baptized into a Body (1 Cor. xii. 13); and the Eternal Purpose of God could not be accomplished. Yet, nevertheless, the immediate result of his absence would be that they would be left alone in the hostile world. "And now I am no more in the world; but these are in the world, and I come to Thee. Holy Father, keep them!" (11.)

This change of outward relative position He makes one of the main grounds of his pleading. He himself is about to leave the world, and to come to the Father. The world (in anticipation) has done its worst upon Him; but these will still be in the world, yet very distinctly separate from it. The Father had given them to Him "*out of* the world" (6): the world had hated them, because of this separation, even as they

had hated Him for the same reason (14: cf. xv. 18, 19). While He had been with them, He had shielded them: the world's spite had spent itself upon Him: He had watched and guarded them as a shepherd his flock, and this in the Father's Name (12). He had manifested this Name to them (6); and had, all along, kept them in its protection, showing them that the Father himself was loving them with a peculiar affection (φιλεῖ; xvi. 27); and making this his fatherly relation to them "a shield for them, their glory, and the lifter up of their head"; even as it was to himself (Psa. iii. 3). And He asks that, now, the Father himself will keep, preserve, and shield them in the same Name.

The manifest result of this paternal guardianship would be practical separation (16–19); a sanctification, the pattern of which would be the walk of Jesus himself; the means, God's word (cf. Eph. v. 26); the end, their testimony and mission to the world, a continuation of his own. Thus the world (*i.e.* unbelievers) has no place in this Intercession; is expressly excluded from it (9). And, though the fruit of their mission to the world is contemplated, as "those who shall believe on Me through their word" (20), such are not regarded as forming any part of *the world*, but as integrally and inseparably one with the Little Flock for whom He is pleading (21); to whom "it is the Father's good pleasure to give the kingdom" (Luke xii. 32).

Again, though our Great Priest speaks of the world's believing that He was sent of the Father (21), and its knowing the Father's love to the Church (23),—as results of certain conditions for which He asks,—these do not imply any saving grace in, or to, the world. For the conditions will not exist till the Church shall be publicly invested with the glory which the Father gave the Son (22); and, the day of God's long-suffering being then ended, the world's believing and knowing, in the horrid consciousness that hope is over for them, in "the fearful looking-for of judgment, and fiery indignation," will be involuntary and inevitable. Caiaphas "will see the Son of Man sitting on the right hand of Power, and coming in the clouds of heaven" (Mark xiv. 62); and the generation which would not have that Man to reign over them, "shall see Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob in the Kingdom of God" (Luke xiii. 28). Yet neither to Caiaphas, nor to his guilty compeers will the sight afford any joy, but only intensify their weeping and gnashing of teeth, that they themselves are thrust out! And so, at last (25) the world, without priest or intercessor, is left to the "Righteous Father," in contrast to the "Holy Father" (11), to whose tender love the Church is committed. How must Righteousness deal with those for whom there is no Mediator!

Thus his feeble trembling Flock is to be left alone in the world, "as sheep in the midst of

wolves," to work for Him, and be his witnesses, as He had witnessed for the Father, and had finished the work which the Father had given Him to do (4, 18). He had just told them that the power of their service would be the Holy Ghost, whom the Father would send in answer to his prayer (xiv. 16), to abide with them, and in them, through the age. But, strange to say, (and I cannot explain the omission), not the slightest allusion to this impending Gift appears in this his priestly intercession.

As this sample of Mediation began with Eternity past, so does it end with Eternity to come. The Son, in the ineffable dignity of the co-equal Word, says, "Father, I will that even these whom Thou hast given Me, be with Me where I am, that they may behold my glory which Thou gavest Me; for Thou lovedst Me before the foundation of the world" (xvii. 24). But He had just said more than this: "The glory which Thou gavest Me I have given them" (22). His saints, then, shall not only *behold,* but actually *possess* his proper glory.

But what is this glory which He shares with us? It is surely nothing less than what He had had with the Father's own self, before the world was (5); for this is the very glory with which He asks now to be glorified. To the elevation of the exalted God-man is the Church to be raised, "which is in God the Father, and in the Lord Jesus Christ"!

In that "authority over all flesh," which is his by the Father's gift in requital for his having emptied himself (Psa. viii. 6; Phil. ii. 10), He gives to as many as had been given to Him (2; cf. x. 28) Eternal Life; for inexhaustible happiness, and full knowledge of God.[1]

It is very worthy of our grateful notice, that our Great Priest accredits his believing people with all perfectness, when He speaks of them to God. The words which He had learned of the Father, and delivered unto them (xv. 15), they had received: they had thus known surely that He had come forth from the Father; they had believed that the Father had sent Him (8). And this, the Father's Word, they had kept (6), preserved safe, held fast as a treasure, amidst temptations to give it up. They had known, too, that all things in Him were in fellowship with the Father (7); though, practically their amount of spiritual apprehension appears to have been very poor and infantile. As they were the Father's at first, by right of creation, and had been given by Him to the Son by Covenant (6), so are they still the Father's (9); doubly the objects of his interest and love, *now*, since they are his dear Son's;—as He says, "All mine are

[1] Is it grammatically impossible that the sense of ver. 3 may be,—"And this Life is eternal, in order that they may know Thee"?—thus giving to ἵνα its usual force of design, and making αἰώνιος an emphatic predicate:—*q.d.*, nothing short of Eternity will avail to know God.

thine, and thine are mine" (10); thus asserting again, but in the simplest words, his equality of right, and unity of interest, with the Most High God. And then He adds, "I have been glorified in them";—deigning to attribute to those poor, weak, vacillating, timorous, ignorant disciples an augmentation of his own glory, which we could scarcely have recognized from the Gospel narratives. Separation from the world, like his own (16); sanctification to God, like his own (17, 19); a mission to the world, like his own (18); and a hatred in return for it, like his own (14);—all this union and identification with himself, so precious to us to mark, He presents prominently to his Father: and then, embracing in the Mediation the whole body of believers yet to be brought out, He claims for them union and identification with himself in the Father's love (23, 26); and in the Eternal Glory (22). So closes this marvellous priestly scene.

Our attention was lately directed to another aspect of the same Lord Jesus, in dealing with the same persons, his disciples, his servants,—ourselves. We saw Him amidst his raised ones, trying their works, examining, as Sovereign Lord, what each had done for Him; sitting on a Judgment-seat, dispensing earned rewards, and imposing mulcts, "*losses*," for unfaithfulness or carelessness. How sternly strict will be that investigation! how minutely righteous every decision!

But here how different! He finds no fault; he sees no imperfection! As, of old, "He had not beheld iniquity in Jacob, neither had He seen perverseness in Israel" (Num. xxiii. 21); so, the Father "hath chosen us in Him . . that we should be holy and without blame before Him" (Eph. i. 4). God "hath made *Him* to be sin for us, who knew no sin, that we might be made the *Righteousness of God,* in Him" (2 Cor. v. 21).

Yes; this is the Priest's work; to present to the All-holy God, in perfect acceptance, on the ground of plenary sacrifice and satisfaction rendered, those who had been guilty. And this is why He begins his Intercession (ver. 4) by arraying before God his own finished Work,—a work which had so greatly glorified Him!

XX.

SCIENCE VERSUS REVELATION.

I. CREATION.

THE fiercest conflict of the present era rages around what is called Science. The war which "the Dragon went forth to wage with the remnant of the woman's seed, who keep the commandments of God, and hold fast the testimony of Jesus" (Rev. xii. 17),—has been for some time concentrating in this phase, Science versus Revelation. It is not, as often ignorantly described, Science v. Religion. *Religion*, the homage, or duty, which man is bound (*religare*) to pay to God, is not directly affected. It is God's communication to man, his *Revelation*, that is contradicted by what assumes to be Science. The vast accession made to the knowledge of natural things, during the past century, by the observations of innumerable students, and by the conclusions deduced therefrom, has been, by the Arch Enemy, turned into a most potent weapon against the faith, used with marvellous skill for insidiously discrediting, first, and then arrogantly denying, the teachings of Holy Scripture.

It is startling to mark how fatally successful have been his tactics. A very large number of professed Christians,—perhaps *even the majority* of such as are competent to think about the matter,—are, more or less, tainted with the prevalent unbelief; conscious of, at least, a lurking suspicion that some of the Bible statements are not absolutely trustworthy; but must be, if not rejected, explained away, in some non-natural exegesis. Even in those who read Papers, or deliver Lectures, professedly to defend Revelation against sceptical Science, this unworthy trimming is sometimes painfully manifest. And we are ready to exclaim with the Poet,—

> "What boots it, at one gate to make defence,
> And at another to let in the foe?"

Various subterfuges and shifts are used to evade the verbal accuracy of the Sacred Word; needless concessions here, and admissions there, allow the truth of God to pass by default. One makes a distinction between the veracity of different parts, ignoring, or denying its integral unity. There is often an underlying assumption that, at whatever cost, the teachings of the Bible must be subject to the accepted conclusions of Science: and, in general, the *tone* of the Lecturer is one of frowning severity toward the simple believer, and of tolerant sympathy toward the scientific infidel.

No doubt this apologetic treatment of God's

Word is, to many, very painful. But they think it unavoidable. They would gladly assume a bolder position, if they dared; but they know not how. They do not see, on the one hand, the impregnable strength of the Scripture, nor, on the other, the inherent weakness of scientific assertion. For, after all, it is not *Science* that is opposed to Revelation. A scient is one that knows (*scio*); and science is what *he knows*, not what he *thinks* about what he knows. But what is so boastfully arrayed against the Scripture is not *facts*, but man's explanation of facts; his deductions, inferences, which he then calls (falsely) Science. If the facts can be legitimately accounted-for, on a principle which does not contradict the written Word, the opponent is disarmed, and his "Science" becomes mere brag.

The number of the students of physical phenomena; their skill, knowledge, learning; their concurrence and their confidence; the prestige derived from association in august corporations; and the *prima-facie* apparent necessity of their inferences;—have thrown around them such a glamour, that the uninitiated world is cowed into submission:—"what such and so many men affirm must be truth!" especially as we cannot meet them on their own ground.

That Science has quite put out of court the Bible is now quietly assumed on all hands;—in public lectures; in the leading articles of the

great newspapers; in memoirs read before learned societies; in popular treatises; in the swarming reviews and magazines of periodical literature (except such as are professedly religious): and the Name of God, or any reference to Him, in dealing with the natural world, is carefully shunned.

"When the Son of Man cometh, shall He find faith on the earth?" has seemed a paradox to many: but do we not see such a condition around us now?

To withstand this general consensus of infidelity requires a fearless confidence in God; and to withstand it successfully requires a practised skill in the use of Divine weapons. The weapons are in the armoury, and are invincible; namely, the sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God, and the shield of faith, wherewith we shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked one. We cannot wonder that he strives with a desperate energy in this conflict; for his kingdom depends on it. Every one who has implicitly and cordially received God's testimony has been "delivered out of the authority of the Darkness, and translated into the kingdom of His dear Son" (Col. i. 13). Well may he strive, "having great wrath, because he knoweth that he hath but a short time."

But are there, really, weapons of sufficient strength and temper to be wielded with un-

doubting confidence? May I, indeed, oppose the affirmations of Scripture to the conclusions of any men, however numerous, or learned, or venerable? How do I know that this ancient Book is Truth without any admixture of error? Surely every Christian is intimately concerned to know distinctly the evidence on which, and the extent to which, the Bible claims to be the Word of God. How can this be shown?

There are many lines of evidence, more or less cogent. But I am content to press that one, which God Himself has chosen, as the great Test-Fact to which He appeals. He points man to the Sign of the Prophet Jonas; the RESURRECTION OF JESUS. Can it be proved historically, irrefutably, impregnably, that Jesus died, and was raised to life? If this can be shown to be an historic fact, then our feet are on a Rock, which cannot be shaken. All the rest will follow, as a matter of necessity. This then is worth examining.

All the eminent critics of the unbelieving school, as Renan, Strauss, etc., admit that Jesus lived in Palestine about the 200th Olympiad, was a public teacher, gathered a body of disciples who owned him the Messiah, and was crucified under Pilate the Roman procurator. They uniformly admit the existence of Paul, a teacher of the new Religion, and the indubitable genuineness of, at least, four of his preserved letters, written within twenty-eight years after

Jesus's death. They admit that, by A.D. 100, Christian Corporations had been formed in all the chief cities of the Empire; and that the first three Gospels were accepted in their present form, as authentic memoirs of Jesus:—that is, within the life-time of many persons from the Crucifixion. Tens of thousands must have conversed with those who declared themselves eye-witnesses of his resurrection. For not a single Church could be formed, except of such as were satisfied of this; since, if Christ was not raised, their faith would be vain; and though, of course, there would be many unable to weigh logical evidence, there must have been, in every city, *many* who both could and would.

In each of these letters the writer very prominently presents the Resurrection, as a fact of which he himself is absolutely certain, and assumes that his readers accept it too. He does not treat it as a new truth; but as a fundamental fact admitted by them, and deduces its sequences. Yet, in one passage (1 Cor. xv.), because there were at Corinth some (perhaps recent incomers) who denied that revivification of the dead is possible, he does draw out, in detail, the evidence of the fact.

The Epistle was written A.D. 57. Six distinct occasions are mentioned when Jesus had been seen alive after his death, by persons who (with one exception) had personally known Him well. Several of these appearings were to many persons

at once, precluding the hypothesis that it was merely a "subjective" apparition: but once he was seen of above 500 brethren together, of whom the greater part were still alive. Now these can scarcely have been fewer than 300; and thus we find Paul, writing to a company of acute Greeks, comprising personal antagonists to him, jealous and sharp enough, stakes his authority on the fact, easily disproved if false, —that some 300 persons were alive, not more than twenty-five years after the crucifixion, who had, together, seen the risen Christ. And he reminds them that he had told them the same, personally, when he had formed the Church, half-a-dozen years before.[1]

If Jesus was really revived after being really dead, it was by the exercise of Divine power, and was an interposition of God distinctly accrediting all his claims. As the Apostles say, "He was declared to be Son of God, in power, by the resurrection of the dead." Thus the Economy which He was introducing was avouched by God; the instrumentality which He adopted

[1] For a much fuller array of this line of evidence I refer my readers to the excellent Memoirs of the Rev. Stanley Leathes, on "The Evidential Value of St. Paul's Epistles," in "Modern Scepticism," p. 363 (Ed. 5), and the Rev. C. A. Row, on "The Historical Evidence of the Resurrection of Jesus Christ," in "Pop. Obj. to Rev. Truth," p. 225 (Ed. 3): and to the exhaustive little volume of Dr. Kennedy, "The Resurrection of Jesus Christ an Historical Fact" (Rel. Tr. Soc.).

for the purpose was unerring, viz. the Holy Spirit, who was given to his disciples, to "guide them into all the truth." We are sure, then, that what they authoritatively delivered under the inspiration of the Spirit is unmingled truth; since to suppose error mingled with it, because they were themselves fallible, is to impeach his knowledge, truth, wisdom and power, as if He would not, or could not, guard against such contingency;—as if God could not help his object being thwarted.

But Jesus and his Apostles constantly appeal to Writings reaching up to a vast antiquity, already gathered into a cumulate unity, and publicly recognised as Divine by the Israelite nation. Now these have descended to our own days; and we are quite sure that we have them just as they were accepted for three centuries before the birth of Jesus; for, at that time, they were translated into Greek. This version, known as that of the Septuagint (LXX.), is abundantly quoted in the New Testament, and has, side by side with the Hebrew original, descended to us.[1]

In these Scriptures there is a vast multitude of references, pervading them throughout, to a Person whom, at some time, God would send to accomplish certain Divine purposes; one who, while signally honoured and approved of God,

[1] Faith does not rest on a translation, nor on a copy. God has given us means of checking both. Here is a sphere of legitimate, reverent criticism.

should markedly suffer under his wrath; should be reproached, rejected, despised, put to death, and then be revived, and conducted along "the path of life," to the Throne of God. These references Jesus, during his life, expressly adopted, and claimed to centre in Him; and thus distinctly and repeatedly announced, to his reluctant disciples, that He should be killed, and be raised to life.

We have these Scriptures in our own hands; and can compare them ourselves with the event; and can judge how greatly their predictions affect the verity of the Resurrection; removing it wholly from the hypothesis of a man only half killed reviving; or that of enthusiastic friends deluded into fancying that they saw Him after death, when they really saw nothing.[1]

The Scriptures themselves are authenticated by the frequent citation of them by the Son of God. He speaks of them as an integral whole, ἡ γραφὴ;—"He that believeth on Me, as *the Scripture* hath said,—" (John vii. 38); and again, resting on the use of a particular word, and declaring that "*the Scripture* cannot be broken" (Ib. x. 35); where the term employed, λυθῆναι, is of remarkable force, signifying,—"it cannot, must not, be *loosed*, or slackened, from its strictness." He cites the Scripture as God's voice,—"that which was spoken unto you by

[1] See the Bp. of Carlisle, in *Contemp. Review* for Sept. 1884; p. 435.

God" (Matt. xxii. 31). Nay, it is remarkable that He directly and verbally quotes, as of commanding authority (Matt. xix. 4–6), the very portion of the Scripture, which is so arrogantly denied by modern science,—the first two chapters of Genesis, revealing the miraculous creation of Man, and the formation of Woman.

Thus, it seems to me, the absolute verity of the first page of the Bible, and of every word therein, rests solidly on the fact that Jesus was raised from the dead. If He was raised, He is the Son of God, incapable of falsehood or error. He is responsible that the Scripture, in every detail, is the Word of God, and *cannot be broken*. On this rock the humble believer may take his stand, and defy all the boasts of "philosophy and vain deceit" (Col. ii. 8); all the deductions and traditions of men, even though they falsely dignify these with the name of science.

The great fortress of modern infidelity,—whence are shot so many "fiery darts of the wicked one" (Eph. vi. 16),—is Geology. Very many Christians are so impressed and awed by its gigantic pretensions, that they are like all Israel, trembling and cowering before Goliath (1 Sam. xvii. 11), dismayed and greatly afraid. There is, moreover, a most insidious *attractiveness* in this study, a fatal meretricious beauty, above what marks other natural sciences; which, like the strange woman (Prov. vi., vii.) "hunts for the precious life." I do greatly fear, that, in

the coming Day, thousands will bitterly bewail the fatal hour, when they listened to the glozing lies with which Geology undermined, in their consciences, the authority of the Divine Word.

The facts are, indeed, immense and indisputable. The fossils, by myriads, are in the rocks; —manifestly the solidified frames of organic beings; in vast variety; yet all constituting, together with the existing fauna and flora, a great comprehensive plan, arranged in multiform gradation. Every visitor to a museum has gazed upon examples.

Suppose it is a young medical student, of orthodox education: he sees a number of bones imbedded in stone, evidently the skeleton of a deer. His acquaintance with anatomy enables him to see that the objects are true bones. He sees cylinders, condyles, cavities for marrow, scars of attachment of muscles and tendons, foramina for the passage of nerves and veins. But bones imply flesh; flesh implies blood; blood implies life; life implies time. He therefore concludes that this skeleton was once alive, at a period antecedent to the formation of this imbedding stone. The stone itself is a fragment of one of the many kinds of rock, which form the crust of the earth, in thick layers or strata, deposited one on another, in order, to an aggregate depth of ten miles or more; but, subsequently to their solid condition, upheaved, and broken, and distorted, witnessing to vast periods

of time. Our youth, as he leaves the museum, suddenly recollects what he has been taught, that Creation occurred only some 6000 years ago. And his faith, such as it is, has received a sensible shock.

In the upheaved strata plant- and animal-skeletons, like this, of very many species, occur: those near the present surface closely resembling such as now exist; but giving place to other forms more and more unlike, the farther we proceed:—each deposit "provided with its own written story, its sacred memoranda, assuring us of the regularity and order that prevailed, and of the perfect uniformity of plan."

This is exceedingly fascinating and captivating. I do not wonder that geologists, looking solely at the phenomena, presume a vast succession of ages for the life-history of the globe: the evidence patent to sense seems irresistible. Yet, truly, the rocks in their superposed order, and the fossils in them, alone, are patent: the ages are, logically, but an inference.

Yet, you may say, are we not *compelled* to infer the ages? Is any other hypothesis conceivable? If there were none, still the authority of the Word of God is paramount. But there is another, by which the difficulty is wholly met.

Twenty-seven years have passed since I published "*Omphalos: an Attempt to untie the Geological Knot.*" In this work I propounded, and illustrated by copious examples, a principle,

or Law of the Natural World, which I called "Prochronism"; that, 1. all organic life, without any exception, runs in a perpetual circle, to which no normal beginning can be assigned: 2. creation is a violent bursting into the circle: 3. the creature, at the moment of its creation, must bear evidence of a previous existence: 4. which evidence is necessarily illusory. I did not propound this principle as an hypothesis; but as a necessity: I did not say that it was probably so; but that it was certainly so: not that it might have been thus; but that it could not have been otherwise:—assuming Creation at all.

The great oval scars that stud the trunk of a tree-fern indicate that successive fronds have sprung and fallen from them. The close-set concentric lines that cover the stump of a felled oak are the records of so many seasonal generations of leaves. The stony frills that run round the valves of a cockle; the thin horny laminæ laid one on another, that make each plate of a tortoise's shell a low cone; the hairs, and nails, and bones, of a man;—all must have been patently present in the newly created being, visible proofs of an already past existence; which proofs were yet wholly untrue.

If it be asked, what amount of analogy subsists between a single organism and the whole globe, or universe, I own that I cannot certainly tell. But since the salient point in the economy of each organic being is its circular character, on

which its prochronism depends; and, since we can detect this circularity in many departments of Physics,—the analogy is very probable, and, at all events, waits to be disproved. Look at a river. Was a given drop of water created as a component part of a running stream? It looks back to the mountain-spring whence it issued: this again to the surface, whence it oozed: this to the clouds, whence it dropped: this to the sea or lake, whence it evaporated: this to the river, whence it flowed. And so the cycle is complete.

So, the great pelagic currents; and the trade-winds of equatorial regions; are perpetual circles. So are the motions of the planets, satellites, and stars. The orbital course of the moon demands the pre-existence of the earth; and both demand that of the sun. If a being with modern astronomical knowledge had been on the earth at the moment after its creation, he might have calculated, with unhesitating certainty, the solar and lunar eclipses of a century, or a chiliad, before; *i.e.*, before the sun and the moon existed! The ight of a star of the 12th magnitude requires 4000 years to reach our eyes: and Sir W. Herschell remarks that the star in question must have existed so long in sidereal space, in order that it might now be visible. But, with due deference to so great an authority, the sensific undulation might surely have been created, at the observer's eye, when *he* was created; and the 4000 years have been prochronic.

Such, in brief, is the reasoning presented in "*Omphalos*." The seven and twenty years that have passed have not shown me any flaw in the argument. Had I not a right to expect that it should be soberly and candidly considered, and either admitted with its logical sequences, or disproved? Common truth and honesty required this. But, so far as I am aware, no geologist has attempted to answer my reasoning: no one has essayed to show that the principle is false, or that it is not relevant to the case. No one has proved (I do not speak of assertion, or of banter) that, if true of individual organisms, it is not true of species: or, if true of species, it is not and cannot be true of the whole plan of life *ab initio*. But, until this has been logically proved, to go on assuming the lapse of ages, as if it were undeniable, is surely dishonest; and seems to indicate a conscious weakness of the position.

XXI.

SCIENCE versus REVELATION.

II. Death.

In weighing the testimony of Scripture to the age of the organic world, we may, for the present, waive the six-day statements in Genesis i., in the Decalogue, and in the Psalms;[1] putting the issue on the broader ground of the grand counsels of God concerning his Son, which are unfolded in the Word; especially that purpose of his (Eph. i. 10), "to gather together into a head (*ἀνακεφαλαιώσασθαι*) all things in Him," as Son of Man.

With this purpose Creation is inseparably connected; and we may reverently affirm, from what is revealed, that this world could never have existed otherwise than in direct and manifest subordination to a Human Headship.[2] A world

[1] But see Professor McCaul on the historical character of Gen. i., ii. (*Aids to Faith*, p. 199).

[2] It is no valid objection to this argument, to say that, during the first five days, Creation was without a human Head. For it was an unfinished work; a work still under the Artificer's hand. It would not refute the assertion that a microscope must necessarily have a lens, to say that the foot and the rack-work were made before the lens was prepared.

full of sentient beings, without a responsible intelligent Head, is an idea wholly foreign to all that the Only-wise God has made known to us of his plans. His works are marked by the most perfect order and rule; and there is an unity in his plans, which enables us to argue from one to another. No sooner was the present constitution of things prepared, than a Head was placed over it, to have dominion; made thus in the "image of God." He was, to this creation, a Vice-God; God's representative and vicegerent: God's rule was vested in him. This Head was Man. Yet not Adam, individually and personally only, but as the progenitor of a Seed; for, by careful comparison of Genesis i. 28, Psalm viii. 6, and Hebrews ii. 6–9, we find that there was involved in the Headship a certain *Son* of Man, whom the Holy Ghost explains to be the Lord Jesus. Thus, as elsewhere affirmed (Col. i. 16), "ALL things were created" not only "by Him," but "*for* Him"; and for Him expressly as Son of Man.

This federal connexion of Creation with Humanity is a fact of the utmost importance in estimating the claims of Geologists. It is amazing that Christians generally have ignored it, and allowed judgment to go by default, when they had an impregnable position, which they might have defended against all assaults.

God's purposes are immutable and irrefragable: "his counsel shall stand, and He will do all his

pleasure"; however circumstances and creatures may seem to frustrate it. This unity and immutability of design preclude the supposition that Creation could ever have had any other Head than Man. If, in former ages, the dominion of this world had been vested in some other race, corporeal or spiritual,—that Headship must have been displaced for the human. But this would be contrary to the declaration that "all things, visible and invisible, were created *for Him*, who is the first-born of the whole Creation (πρωτότοκος πάσης κτίσεως)."

We may reverently predicate what God would do, or would not do, under certain circumstances, from what He, the Immutable, has done. See what actually occurred in conditions parallel to those of the supposititious case of a former unknown Head falling into apostasy. Adam fell from his allegiance, and thus lost his place of rule. Did God displace Man, and set-up another dynasty? No: He stablished the human dominion in the person of his own beloved Son. The dynasty of Man as Head of Creation can never be removed, but it must be vested in another person; and God becomes Man, in order that the counsels of God may stand, and the Headship be no more liable to lapse.

Yet it is confidently affirmed that this material Creation,—animals and plants on this globe, existed millions of ages before the Headship of Man began. Nay, more; that Creation went-on

in ruin for those countless periods; that vanity, suffering, rapine, pain, and death, were the undeviating rule. Nay, more; that there was an indefinite succession of universal ruins; that creation succeeded creation, fauna after fauna, race after race, throughout those doleful ages; every one of which, without a solitary exception, fell into ruin; nay, *never knew anything else but ruin!* Shall Christians have such thoughts of God as this?

Perhaps it may be replied,—"But do we not see a creation actually going-on *in ruin* around us?" Most surely we do. But Revelation fully explains the otherwise astounding fact. Indeed, if the Word had not distinctly stated anything on the subject, we might be warranted in inferring the revealed conclusion. It seems incontrovertible that, in a perfect government, such as that of God must be, there never could be suffering, except as the result of sin;—sin personal, or sin putative. Wherever we see suffering, we have a right to assert, "That being has sinned, either personally, or in its representative, with whom it is identified in the Governor's sight." This position is impregnable: because, to suppose a creature suffering, except for sin, impugns either the justice, or the power, of the Creator. There is an implied compact in the relation of the Governor and the governed, that so long as they render Him obedience, He will protect them from suffering.

But we are not left to reason out this conclusion. The Holy Ghost (Rom. v. 12—) distinctly affirms that "death entered into the world through sin." And though this is predicated of *man primarily*, yet the important principle is affirmed (14), that death is the result of *imputed*, as well as *personal*, sin. Why do infants suffer and die,—infants a day old?

In the same Epistle, however (viii. 19–22), the very same principle is applied to the external creation (ἡ κτίσις);—which "is waiting for the manifestation [the unveiling] of the sons of God, in hope that itself shall be delivered out of the bondage of [consequent on] the ruin, into the liberty of [consequent on] the glory, of the children of God." [1]

[1] The final clause, "τῶν τέκνων τοῦ Θεοῦ," is governed by, and hangs upon, each of the two preceding clauses, *equally*, which correspond in structure to each other:—

ἀπὸ τῆς δουλείας τῆς φθορᾶς
εἰς τὴν ἐλευθερίαν τῆς δόξης
} τῶν τέκνων, κ.τ.λ.

The entire passage, very imperfectly rendered in the Authorised Version, may be thus given:—

"For the earnest expectation of the Creation is awaiting the revelation of the sons of God (for the Creation was subjected to vanity, not willing, but on his account who did subject it), in hope that even itself, the Creation, shall be liberated from the slavery of the fall, into the liberty of the glory, of the children of God. For we know that the whole Creation is groaning and agonizing together [*lit.* co-groaning, and co-agonizing (συν in comp.): as if sharing the groans and agonies of mankind]; until now."

Here, then, it is implied that the groaning condition of the whole Creation is a slavery (*δουλεία*), flowing out of the lapse of the sinning but elect, and therefore redeemed, race, the chosen sons of God, in which it shares with them;—and that this condition shall be removed when the last traces of the curse are lost in their hastening glory.

But, in a parenthesis, the federal connexion of the Creation with Man is more broadly stated. As a reason why the Creation waits for the unveiling of the sons of God, it is said,—for the Creation was subjected to vanity (aimlessness, helplessness, death), not exercising any will in the matter, but on account of another, viz. him who did subject it. And this could be none other than Man, its federal Head, in whose standing or falling itself stood or fell.[1]

Geologists assert, however, that death, violent painful death, pervaded this world through uncounted ages before Man existed. Of whose sin, then, was all this "vanity" the result? Of the

[1] Other interpretations of this clause, and indeed of the entire passage, have been given, some wide enough from the Spirit's thought: such as supposing *τὸν ὑποτάξαντα* to be God himself, or Satan! But no other exegesis is at all in harmony with the argument than that which makes Adam the person signified. It has been objected that *ὑποτάσσειν* is a word of authority; and therefore "he who subjected" creation must be God, not Adam. But Adam, as having dominion over all, had authority to lead all after him.

creatures' own sin?—the sin of the Plesiosauri, of the Belemnites, of the Corals? If not, if *personal* sin is out of the question, when the sufferer is a Cephalopod or a Zoophyte,—then, whose sin was imputed to them? Sin, the transgression of some responsible being, must have preceded the suffering; and the sin of some being who stood in federal relation to the sufferers. But a federal Head of Creation, other than Man, could not have been. For this would be to set aside the Headship of Jesus, the Son of Man, as the object of the eternal unchangeable purpose of God the Father.

But the difficulty of Death may be pressed farther yet. Geologists tell us that many species of animals found fossil in the strata of the later pre-human eras are absolutely identical and continuous with those which now live. Among them are all the species of Deer now inhabiting the British Islands.

Now, suppose a geologist, who is also an instructed Christian, and myself, chanced to be walking on Ascot Heath, at the moment when the royal hounds had brought a noble stag to bay. We witness the distress of the animal; his vain efforts at escape or defence; his agony as the life-blood pours from his throat under the fangs of his assailants; and his convulsive throes of death. I ask my friend, "Whence come the sufferings of this creature, incapable of personal sin?" He would of course answer, being an

instructed believer, "Death is entailed upon its race, because of the fall of Man, its federal head." No other reasonable answer could be given; since there can be no exception to the category of "the *whole* creation," or "*every* creature" (*πᾶσα ἡ κτίσις*), which is spoken of as involved in Man's lapse, and waiting for Man's glory.

But I rejoin to my friend,—"How can that be? For you tell me that this race of stags, in uninterrupted continuity, has been dying, generation after generation, ever since the middle Tertiary Period; that is, long ages before Man was created. If this is true, certainly death did not come upon the Red Deer as the result of Adam's sin, for it was already a dying race long before."

What answer could he make? If he should assert that some earlier Head of Creation had entailed death on the cervine race, I would reply that this would really be a denial of the Headship of the Lord Jesus (as I have already explained); and, moreover, it would involve the absurdity of the creatures' surviving the dynasty of their representative, with whom they had been identified, and carrying the punitive results of *his* transgression into the dominion of a new federal Head. It would involve, too, the intolerable supposition, that, from day to day, when God, surveying His handiwork in detail, pronounced it good, and, at the close of the sixth day, took an infinite complacency in it as a whole, in that,

"behold, it was *very* good," death was already lording it over many of the creatures, and had been doing so all along, transmitting into this new Creation the ruin and decay and vanity of a former one!

Thus, the universally accepted geological conclusion, of the continuance of species from a pre-human into the human era, is absolutely irreconcilable with the fact asserted by the Holy Spirit, —that creature-suffering is the consequence of imputed sin. It must, therefore, be pronounced false. And its falsity vitiates the whole doctrine of geological Macro-chronology.

The argument is met, not answered, by the hackneyed remark,—"The Bible is not intended to teach us science." How few who make this remark know what the Bible really is intended to teach! It is not a mere code of laws: it is not a book of ethics. Neither is it, as many Christians seem to think, a mere book of instructions to man, how he may be delivered from the wrath to come. There is, indeed, this in it; blessed be God! but oh! this is very far short of the mind of the Holy Ghost in Revelation. The great subject of the Bible is CHRIST. God is occupied with the glory of His beloved Son Jesus; and the matter revealed in this precious Book is the development of that glory, and very specially in connexion with the earth. It is the glory of the Son of Man, as Head over all things, "the Beginning (ἡ ἀρχὴ) of the Creation of God"

(Rev. iii. 14). And, therefore, nothing connected with Creation can be said to be foreign to the Bible, or to be out of place, when the Father condescends to reveal the Son.

Others may go to the Bible for what is called "theology," and to Nature for "science." I cannot divide them. I cannot look at the Bible with one eye, and at Nature with the other. I must take both together, always giving the Word the paramount authority. Men may say the Bible is obscure, but Nature is clear. Have they studied the former as fully, as sincerely, as ardently, as they have the latter? It has been cast at me as a reproach, that I assume to have some acquaintance with the mind and ways of God! Shall the Blessed One condescend to make known his mind to his Children, and yet it be wrong for me to think that I can know it? One of my scientific critics, reproving my presumption, speaks of the "reverent man," as "only pondering silently in his most solemn and meditative moods" on certain "secrets and mysteries." Ah! I shall never guess out the thoughts of the High and Lofty One in that way. I prefer to come to his own Word, his own Book, written by Himself expressly for my instruction; and there I find many things, that else would have remained "secrets and mysteries," made transparent as a sunbeam. The charge of treating the things of God with flippant familiarity is a more serious one than that of defective logic; but was not the

gravamen of my offence this, that I had endeavoured to depict, graphically and palpably, that which God himself has so presented to us;—instead of shrouding it in an obscurity which would warrant us in politely bowing it aside out of our consideration?

The inspired Word distinctly states that animals and plants were created in full adult vigour:—great whales; moving creatures with life; winged fowl; cattle; creeping things; every plant "before it was in the earth"; and every herb "before it grew." Therefore all these objects bore on their bodies marks of gradual development, inseparable from them, such as the concentric timber-rings of the tree; the divaricating branches, and boughs, and twigs, all looking back to buds; the layered scales of fishes; the hairs and teeth of mammals;—which marks, however, were, of course, illusory, the development to which they witnessed being *prochronic*, that is, unreal.

It has been said that this is to make God a "Deus quidam deceptor"; that I represent God as telling a lie. There would be some plausibility in the charge, if I had represented God as giving no information on Creation, except in the things created. But He has given it, fully and explicitly, in his Word. Parrhasius might have been called a deceiver, when he painted a curtain with such perfection of art that his rival thought it real; but should we have charged him with

falsehood, if he had legibly inscribed on it, "I have produced this effect by laying paint upon canvas"? But that a holy God has an awful way of dealing with those who "do not *like* to retain Him in their knowledge" (Rom. i. 28), the vision of Micaiah (1 Kings xxii. 19–22) shows.[1]

I have endeavoured to demonstrate that the testimony of Holy Scripture is completely set aside, on the matters in question, by geologists. It is repeated, *ad nauseam*, that "Geology yields the strongest confirmation to the Bible"; but when we examine such statements in detail, we find that the writers mean no more than that the fossils afford, in common with all natural phenomena, evidence of the existence of God, and of some of his attributes. The manner in which the question is generally argued is most puerile; and would not be tolerated were acquaintance with the Word of God, among true Christians, less superficial than it is: were not the solicitude of most, even of these, limited to the point of personal salvation. The thoughts of the Father concerning the Son—who sets himself to understand these? The consequence is,—the avowed infidels are driving-in the outworks of the fold, and the sheep are looking into one another's frightened faces, and know not what to say or do.

[1] See also 2 Thess. ii. 11; and Isa. vi. 8–10, with Matt. xiii. 13–15.

These arguments will not, of course, meet with any wide acceptance. The world, whether called Christian or heathen, cares nothing about the glory of Christ. But I solemnly appeal to real Christians; to those who have received eternal life, and who know that they have it (1 John v. 11–13); to those who have been called into partnership with Christ (1 Cor. i. 9); joint-heirs with Him of the coming glory (Rom. viii. 17). I appeal to these; and beseech them to re-consider how they can accept the inferences of scients (at best nothing more), whose tendency is to dethrone the Lord Christ as Head of Creation, and to give the lie to the Revelation of God.

XXII.

THINGS COMING ON THE EARTH.

A FEW pages may be profitably devoted to the reverent examination of some of those momentous events which cluster, like a glorious constellation, around the Second Advent of our Lord, and inaugurate the New Heavens and New Earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness. Many and gigantic changes are probably at the very door, even now, heavy with immeasurable consequences in the economy of God; but the worthy treatment of these would demand volumes.

To gather out of the Prophets, both of the Old and New Testaments, their unfulfilled predictions, and to arrange these in their order of succession, seems still, after many endeavours, a desideratum. The following *Ordo Rerum* I put forth but tentatively, and with not a few doubts and misgivings, not of the events themselves, but of their relative succession.

1. The First Resurrection, Change, and Rapture.

2. Overthrow of Rome, Earthquake, and Great Hail.

3. Opening of the Lake of Fire.

4. Restoration of Judah and Israel.
5. Gentile Invasion of Judah.
6. Christ on the White Horse.
7. Beast cast into the Lake of Fire.
8. Treading of the Winepress.
9. Shutting-up of Satan.
10. City and Temple rebuilt.
11. Descent of New Jerusalem.
12. Procession of the Waters.
13. Jesus takes his Earthly Throne.
14. The New Earth.

I have already adduced reasons (*supra*, p. 152) for identifying the Resurrection and Rapture of the Saints (1 Cor. xv.; 1 Thess. iv.; Phil. iii.) with the summons out of Babylon (Rev. xviii. 4). They are called out expressly to give to the proud Harlot her righteous retribution of torment. Then, "in one hour *her* judgment comes." She is "thrown down like a great millstone." She is "utterly burned with fire"; and "her smoke rises up for ever and ever."

This, then, is the great earthquake, mighty beyond precedent, of the Seventh Vial. It is probable that, at the instant of the Rapture of the Church, the whole of Papal Europe will be engulfed by the yawning of the earth bursting into a vast Volcano, never to be quenched. Perhaps one effect of this opening of the bowels of the globe will be to fill up the depression of the

Mediterranean;[1] and so to accomplish that physical change announced (Rev. xxi. 1),—"the sea was no more."

The whole of Southern Europe is eminently volcanic. Travellers in Italy have often described the fair region as but a sleeping volcano, waking now and then from its treacherous slumber. And the structural character stretches across the middle of France,—active as lately as the fifth century,—even to the Atlantic; as witness the awful earthquake of Lisbon in the last century. The Almighty God has never kept secret from the wicked, that "He hath prepared for him the instruments of death." "Tophet is ordained of old; yea, for the King it is prepared: He hath made it deep and large,[2]—a fiery pyre and abundance of fuel [Lowth]: the breath of Jehovah, like a stream of brimstone, doth kindle it" (Isa.

[1] At least the western moiety of it: since, long after this, at the Procession of the Waters, "the Hinder Sea," i.e. *Western*, as to Palestine, is still recognized (Zech. xiv. 8).

[2] It has long been known that the interior of the earth is in a state of fiery fusion. Physicists are agreed that the globe on which we dwell so carelessly is but a shell of solid matter, of no very great thickness, inclosing a furnace of fire. "The increase of heat," says an eminent living astronomer, "as we proceed inwards, seems to indicate that . . at a depth of a thousand miles the heat is so intense that *all known* substances would, at ordinary pressures, be converted into vapour" (Proctor; *Saturn*, 158). This depth would still leave cavern of six thousand miles in diameter, filled with fire.

xxx. 33). This immense yawning, flaming chasm, this "lake of fire burning with brimstone," will remain open and visible, a monument of the righteous wrath of God, through the Millennium. For the saved of the nations, coming up, periodically, to worship at Jerusalem, "shall go forth and look upon the carcases of the men that have transgressed against Me: for their worm shall not die, neither shall their fire be quenched. And they shall be an abhorring unto all flesh" (Isa. lxvi. 24). And the Lord Jesus, in very awful warning words (Mark ix. 43–50), adopts this passage. Well may the Spirit say to hypocrites (Isa. xxxiii. 14), "Who among us shall dwell with devouring fire? Who among us shall dwell with everlasting burnings?"

Perhaps it will not *always* be open. Perhaps, at the end of the thousand years, when the Devil and his Angels, first, and then "whosoever is not found written in the Book of Life, are cast into the Lake of fire,"—it will be finally closed, to meet those figurative phrases which speak of sin as being put out of God's sight. Yet, surely it will be a thought of salutary solemnity, sometimes recurring to the blessed denizens of the New Earth, that "the Wicked are ashes under the soles of their feet" (Mal. iv. 3), in perpetuity of conscious torment!

Between the Descent of the Lord into the upper air to receive his saints (1 Thess. iv. 16) and his Revelation in flaming fire with his

mighty angels, and his saints (2 Thess. i. 7–10), an interval elapses, which we have no means of measuring. It will probably be considerable; possibly running over several years. During this period important events may occur, the most recognizable being the re-assembling of the united Nation of Israel, in the Land.

The Prophets seem to indicate that the Restoration will occur in three separate stages, which we may distinguish as the Firstfruit, the Harvest, and the Gleaning. First, a few, who shall be brought mainly by the ships of some great maritime nation, known as Tarshish (Isa. xviii.; lx. 9). "I will take you, one of a city, and two of a family; and I will bring you to Zion" (Jer. iii. 14): and this in introduction of the time when "Jerusalem shall be the Throne of Jehovah" (17). "In those days the House of Judah shall walk *to* the House of Israel, and they shall come together out of the land of the North, to the land that I have given for an inheritance unto your fathers" (18). Perhaps this gathering of the Firstfruit is already begun.

Secondly, the main body of the nation. Of this the Prophets are full;—a gathering sudden, admitting of no delay (Jer. xxxi. 8, 9), like the Exodus from Egypt, but with far greater magnificence and power (Jer. xvi. 14–16; largely composed of the Ten Tribes, but united with the Two (Hos. i. 11), under one Head; preceded by "THE BREAKER" (Mic. ii. 13),—either

Jehovah in person, or some visible symbol of his presence.

But these do not all enter into the Land: for a purging process (Ezek. xx. 33–38) is executed by Jehovah, *on the road*, whereby the rebels are sifted out, and only the humbled and meekened Remnant are brought in. But even these do not yet know Him whom they pierced, and are not yet washed in the Fountain of his blood (Zech. xii., xiii.).

Thirdly, the Gleaning. It is not till long after this congregation of the main body of Israel, and the re-union of the Two Sticks into One in Jehovah's hand (Ezek. xxxvii.), that the Restoration will be completed. For there will still remain a residue in remote barbarous countries, who shall be brought (Isa. lxvi. 19, 20), as an acceptable offering to Jehovah, with appreciative tenderness and consideration, after the New Creation of the Earth.

I can detect no hint that any temple will be built by restored Israel, except that glorious House, which occupies the last chapters of Ezekiel; every detail of which is prescribed by God, as was the Tabernacle of old; and of which, as soon as it is finished (xliii. 5), the Glory of the God of Israel takes possession; and never departs; Jehovah Shammah ("*the Lord is there*") being the name of the City, from that day forward.[1]

[1] Surely no personal Antichrist will ever sit in this Temple! And if it be said that the Jews will, before

While these great events are proceeding on the earth, events even more momentous are proceeding in the heavens. And, first, in the aerial heavens, whither the Lord Jesus has called around Him his raised and changed saints;—a little flock when on earth, but now, in the aggregate, an innumerable multitude. That there was to be a tarrying in these regions of the air, out of sight of men on the earth, being hidden in clouds, and that important events were to be transacted there, seems suggested by the Lord's descent *thither, but no farther;* and by the expression used of the saints, "caught up unto *a meeting*" (εἰς ἀπάντησιν; not merely "to meet") with the Lord. And the great transaction is, doubtless, that Judgment according to Works, that "Bema of Christ," which has been already considered. It appears to answer to the first Act of the grand Judgment-Psalm;—"Gather my Saints together unto Me, those that have made a covenant with Me by sacrifice. And the heavens

this, have built a temple in their unbelief, I reply that, in the first place, there is not the least proof of this; and, secondly, if they had, the Holy Ghost would not honour such a wilful edifice by calling it the "Temple of God," using, too, the distinctive term ναός, which is the true inner Sanctuary of the Divine Presence, and not ἱερόν, the mere edifice. How could God call a house ναός, unless He were dwelling (ναίω) therein? And this consideration alone is sufficient to prove that the Temple in which the Man of Sin sits can be none other than the Christian Church, which is frequently designated by the term ναός. (See Trench, *Syn. N.T.*)

shall declare his righteousness; for God is Judge himself" (Psa. l. 5, 6). Probably, too, the "Judgment of the quick and the dead, at his appearing and his kingdom" (2 Tim. iv. 1), must be referred to the same congress; since the Apostle appeals to *it*, in his charge to Timothy,—a believer and a servant. And, once more, Peter refers suffering believers to the same (1 Pet. iv. 5); since the relative "*who*" has for its antecedent the sufferers, "ye" of the verse before, not "they," the blasphemers, who will stand in another Court.[1]

When this High Court of Adjudication has done its work, the variously rewarded servants "enter into the joy of their Lord." But his chief Joy is the Bridal Joy; his manifested union with

[1] On the Judgment of the Sheep and Goats (Matt. xxv. 31–46),—the subjects, circumstances and allocation of which have presented so much difficulty to those who hold the premillennial Advent,—I will venture to offer a conjecture.

The prediction begins with the first moment of the Advent: the Judge surveys all the inhabitants of the earth. The setting of the Sheep on his right hand is the Rapture of the Church: the ungodly, being untaken, are, *ipso facto*, on the left. The Saints are invited to inherit the kingdom. *Then* (*i.e.* after a thousand years) the ungodly, proved to be such *by their works*, are doomed to the Lake of Fire. Thus the prediction begins with the First Resurrection, and ends with the Great White Throne; and is parallel and conterminous with Rev. xx. This exegesis, though it does not eliminate all difficulty, will, I think, harmonize everything.

his "Darling," who was on his heart and on his lips (Psa. xxii. 20) in his last agony; that Pearl (Matt. xiii. 46), for which He sold all that He had; that Church (Acts xx. 28), which He purchased with his own blood. And so, now, the Marriage of the Lamb is come (Rev. xix.); and all heaven rings with acclamations. Whether this heaven is other than the aerial heaven; whether the august company of approved servants adjourn to another scene; whether the Heavenly Bridegroom, in taking his Bride to his Father's House, changes the locality,—I do not know. Locality, these countless millions of men and women must have, being now in bodies; but we cannot conjecture where it is.

Before this, the great invasion of the land by the Gentile Confederacy is, no doubt, in progress: that "time of Jacob's Trouble, so great that there is none like it" (Jer. xxx. 7). Whether the "Northern Army," gathered into the Valley of Jehoshaphat, of Joel; the "kings of the Nations, summoned to drink the cup of Jehovah's fury," of Jeremiah; the Wilful King, of Daniel; the nations that besiege Jerusalem, of Zechariah; and the kings of the earth and of the whole world, at Armageddon, of the Revelation; are one and the same in historic fact:—whether the Wine-press of Edom, in Isaiah lxiii.; that of the Vine of the Earth, in Revelation xiv.; and that of the Beast and False Prophet,[1] in Revelation

[1] In some recent works on Unfulfilled Prophecy the

xix., are the same, *inter se;* and, if so, the same with the preceding: whether the invasion by the northern Gog of Ezekiel is another phase of the same (cf. Ezek. xxxix. 17 with Rev. xix. 17), or a quite distinct and much later invasion;—I dare not assert. The descriptions of these mighty overfloodings of Gentile antagonism to Jehovah and His Christ, occupy a very large part of the prophetic Word. To comment on them would fill volumes: and even then, it would be very difficult, if not impossible, to interweave them into a consecutive and consistent picture. It seems plain that, when the calamity of Israel is at its extreme, Jehovah-Jesus intervenes in person, accompanied by his glorified Saints, and attended by his mighty Angels. At this moment, we may presume, "the inhabitants of Jerusalem [=the *residue* of Zech. xiv. 2] shall look upon Him whom they pierced (xii. 10).

All is now forgiven. Jerusalem's "warfare is accomplished; her iniquity is pardoned: she

False Prophet (in Rev. xvi. 13; xix. 20; and xx. 10) is interpreted as Mohammedanism; even by those who see the Papacy in the Beast. And, at the present conjuncture, the rise and success of the Mahdi in the Soudan, who is commonly spoken of in newspapers as "the false prophet," are viewed with the greater interest, in the light of these references. But the slightest attention should have shown that the characteristics of the "False Prophet," in xix. 20, are those of the Second Beast in xiii. 11–17, the minister and confederate of the Latin Beast.

hath received of Jehovah's hand double for all her sins" (Isa. xl. 2). The New Covenant of Grace (Jer. xxxi. 31; Heb. viii. 7), shall now be made with the House of Israel, and with the House of Judah. The new Spirit,—*God's* Spirit,—He will put within them (Ezek. xxxvi. 26, 27): and this Spirit shall not depart from them, nor from their seed, nor from their seed's seed, from thenceforth for ever (Isa. lix. 21).

And now the BRANCH, the true David, becomes King and Priest in Jerusalem restored and beautified. The House is now built, by divine pattern: He takes possession; and thus "his Sanctuary will be in the midst of them *for evermore*" (Ezek. xxxvii. 27; xliii. 4, 7; xlviii. 35).

Vast physical changes in the surface of the earth, concurrent with the Second Advent, are repeatedly spoken of; but, of the order and sequence of them, we must speak modestly, and only tentatively. Isaiah and Micah describe "the Mountain of Jehovah's House as established in the top of the mountains, and exalted above the hills." We might reasonably have interpreted this metaphorically; but that other Prophets predict the like fact literally. Zechariah says, "All the land shall be turned as a plain, from Geba to Rimmon; and it [Jerusalem] shall be lifted up, and inhabited in its place" (xiv. 10). Thus it seems that Southern Palestine shall be an elevated table-land, from a little north of Jericho to the very edge of the Arabian Desert;

with Jerusalem occupying a still loftier eminence. All this perhaps as the result of that mighty earthquake, which will have engulfed the Roman Earth, and filled up the Mediterranean. And Ezekiel, about to see the details of the restored Sanctuary, is first brought in vision, by God, to the land of Israel (xl. 2), and "set on a very high mountain, upon which is as the frame of a City, on the South. Yet, the geographical features do not seem to be altered. For, when the Lord descends to destroy the hostile forces, his feet stand on the *Mount of Olives* (Zech. xiv. 4), which seems, as yet, unchanged.

But now a more terrible and universal shaking of the Earth attends the footsteps of the Almighty King;—the most terrible, and the last. For He saith, "Yet once more, I shake not the Earth only, but also Heaven" (Hag. ii. 6, 21; Heb. xii. 27); "that those things [and those only] which cannot be shaken, may abide." This great Earthquake is mentioned by other Prophets, in many passages:—as Isaiah ii. 19, 21; Joel iii. 16; by Ezekiel at the destruction of Gog (xxx. 20);—a feature which goes far to identify the treacherous assault of this "Prince of Ros, Mosc and Tobl," with the common burden;—and in Psalm xlvi., where it seems associated, as in Zechariah, with the procession of the living waters.

But of this more presently.

XXIII.

THE NEW JERUSALEM.

The Prophet Isaiah (iv. 5) has a mysterious prediction concerning the condition of Jerusalem, when its filth and blood shall have been purged away, and when the Branch of Jehovah shall be beautiful and glorious. "Jehovah will create over every dwelling-place of Mount Zion, and over her assemblies, a Cloud and Smoke by day, and the shining of a Flaming Fire by night. For, over all, the Glory shall be a canopy. And it shall be a pavilion for shadow from the heat by day, and a refuge and covert from storm and rain." And it is observable that this announcement is immediately followed by a bridal Song, in which the Bride sings to her Well-beloved a Lay of complaint against his earthly Vineyard, the House of Israel.

This promise is now to receive its accomplishment. The glorious Lord is now to be seen in a new character. He and his raised Saints have already appeared from heaven, on behalf of his oppressed people, but He and they have been on war-horses, armed Warriors in conflict, as it were, each with his knightly visor down. Now

a City descends out of heaven from God;—a City "which is the Bride, the Lamb's wife."

It was the hope of this House of many Mansions [*i.e.* abiding-places], that made the faithful Patriarchs pilgrims and strangers in the land of promise: for they "looked for *the* City that hath *the* foundations, whose Builder and Maker is God" (Heb. xi. 10).

> "Immoveably founded in grace,
> She stands, as she ever hath stood,
> And brightly her Builder displays,
> And flames with the Glory of God."

It is hard to write soberly in presence of this most glorious vision shown to the Apostle in Patmos (Rev. xxi.). Yet it seems to be the picture of an actual reality; and not a mere symbol of abstract qualities or spiritual relations. No doubt it occurs in a book of symbols: yet, at this point in the grand Prophecy, when Time is merging into Eternity, and the partial is giving way to the perfect, the symbolic veil becomes more and more translucent, and the great realities more manifest. If it is all *mere* symbol, what are the minute details? what the elaborate measurements? what spiritual image does *chalcedony* convey, as distinct from *chrysolite?* why is the former the seventh, the latter the third, foundation? As the great prefiguration proceeds, viz. from xxi. 22 onward, the directly didactic and prophetic mingles with the pictorial.

And again, at xxii. 3–5. And, at its close, there is a solemn asseveration, that "these sayings are faithful and true." And, yet again, in verses 14 and 19, the dwelling in the City is treated as a blessed reality. These considerations are all adverse to the notion that the whole description is no more than a complex symbol.

No doubt the sudden coming into sight, from heavenly space, of a glittering object, unknown to astronomers, self-luminous, above the brightness of the sun, steadily approaching, till it enters our atmosphere, and comes into close proximity to, if not actual contact with, this globe; transcends all human experience, and defies all natural philosophy. But the epoch is an epoch of miracle: the Almighty God is henceforth visibly interposing; and is not bound by natural laws, which He made, and which He can interrupt, or counteract, at his pleasure. The suspension of a non-rotating cubic mass, 1500 miles every way, in our atmosphere or near it, composed of such materials as gold and gems, and inhabited by millions of human beings, in bodies, however ethereal, would surely so augment and throw out of bearing, the specific gravity of the earth, so alter its relations to the sun, to the moon, even to all the other planets, as to be inconceivable and impossible! Nay; I dare not say so. What compensations the "Upholder of all things" (Col. i. 17; Heb. i. 3) may make for the anticipated disturbances, I cannot conjecture. My

business is with his Word. "Hath He spoken, and shall He not make it good?" I am sure He will; though *how*, I do not know.

What is described is a City, an aggregation of human dwellings; with walls, and gates, and one broad-street (*πλατεῖα*), through which a river runs. How the many mansions are arranged *inter se* is not told: but the whole forms a perfect cube of 12,000 stadia in length and breadth and height. Suspended, with the centre over Jerusalem, its boundaries will reach to the shore of the Euxine northward; to Nubia and the middle of Arabia southward; to the Caspian and the Persian Gulf eastward; to Greece and the Sahara westward. If we consider London as covering 100 square miles, and containing 4,000,000 inhabitants (or a million to 25 sq. miles), then this City, including 900,000 sq. miles, would contain 36,000,000,000;—supposing it only a plane surface, like London; but immensely more as a cube. So that there will be plenty of room for "the Redeemed to walk there"!

I suppose this cube to face the earth cornerwise: to consist, indeed, of two pyramids, placed base to base, of which the upper will be the city-proper, and the lower will consist of the twelve glorious foundations. These foundations are the most remarkable feature in the whole material structure; and they form its distinctive character; "the City that hath the foundations."

Each of these twelve foundations is one vast

slab of precious stone; what we know only in minute atoms; but, even so, the most costly objects that earth produces. Each a slab of ninety miles in thickness, diminishing, in succession, from 1500 miles square (the first) to an inverted square pyramid of 150 miles' base (the twelfth). Imagine such immense slabs of jasper (probably diamond), sapphire, emerald, laid one over another, yet suffering no diminution of translucency; for *the whole* is said to be "clear as crystal." Imagine the light of the blazing Glory of God flashing down from the Throne, through these gemmeous foundations; the combined effect of the various hues producing an unimaginably beautiful radiance to the beholders on earth; while all around there appear broad edges of diverse colour, where each slab, in the increasing pyramid, overlaps its successor! To secure this extraordinary magnificence in the eyes of Israel below, is no doubt the object of this pyramidal arrangement of slabs, and of the suspension above the earth.[1]

[1] The foundations are, indeed, described as "the foundations of the wall" (xxi. 14, 19). But, in Ephesians ii. 20, to which reference is distinctly made, it is "all the building," the whole Church as "a habitation of God," that is "built upon the foundation of the Apostles and Prophets." And it was known from patriarchal times, as "the *City* that hath the foundations." If the central portion of the lower pyramid be excavate, for inhabitation, or other use, the available space will be yet more ample, and the lustrous strata be more definitely beneath the *walls*.

We know that, after the Resurrection, "they that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament; and they that turn many to righteousness as the stars" (Dan. xii. 3); that, when the Lord Jesus was transfigured, "his face did shine as the sun, and his raiment was white as the light" (Matt. xvii. 2); and that, when He arrested Saul at Damascus, "a light from heaven, *above* the brightness of the sun, at midday" (Acts xxvi. 13) shone. Above all, "the Glory of God doth lighten this City, and the Lamb is the lamp thereof." What inconceivable intensity of brightness, then, will pervade every part of this pyramidal City, and flame down, softened and tinted by the clear but coloured media, on the Sanctuary and Worshippers beneath!

It is, doubtless, with express reference to this, that the Holy Ghost says to Jerusalem (Isa. lx. 19), "The sun shall be no more thy light. . . Jehovah shall be unto thee an everlasting Light, and thy God thy Glory. *Thy* sun shall no more go down. . ." Not that the sun and moon will cease to shine; but their light will be, as it were, put out, and made of no account, by the excessive radiance from this glorious Canopy, which, too, will be continuous and perpetual. And thus, I think, is explained a very difficult prediction in Zechariah xiv. 6: "And it shall come to pass in that day [viz. the day of Jehovah's descent] that the light shall not be clear and dark [alternately, as now]; but it shall be

one [uninterrupted] Day: known to Jehovah it is! not day and night [in interchange]; but it shall come to pass that, at evening time, it shall be light":—even as light as at noon, because of the Glory above. The saved nations, moreover, are said (Rev. xxi. 24) to "walk in [or by?] the light of it"; which will probably be diffused far over Europe, Asia, and Africa.[1]

[1] Let us not be frightened at the immensity of these brilliant gems, as if their occurrence were impossible. Even in our present sordid earth there is abundant material for them. Diamond is nothing but coal,—pure coal (*carbon*); sapphire and topaz and amethyst are composed of clay, with a little flint (*alumina* with *silica*); beryl, chalcedony, sardius, are almost pure quartz, *i.e.* flint (*silica*):—deposited in crystals, each with its proper angle. How simple would it be, in a new world,—which the New Jerusalem will surely be,—for the Omnipotent to ordain that such forms should be common and characteristic! The City itself (perhaps the upper pyramid, above the foundations) is of pure gold; and yet gold in some new crystalline arrangement; for it is transparent as glass.

The Pearls, which constitute the ever-open gates;—"every several gate was of a single pearl";—seem an insuperable difficulty in the way of a literal exegesis; because we know pearls only as produced by oysters. But Brewster found that the impression of a pearl in wax had the same nacreous play of light as the pearl itself. What constitutes a pearl is lime deposited in very thin layers,—the thinner the more lustrous—which disperse and reflect the rays of light, so that these return and mix with the light directly thrown back from the outer surface. And the iridescence depends on a multitude of microscopically-fine grooves, which run close to each other, in a wavy pattern, all over the surface

The City is environed by "a wall, great and high"; the measured height of which (reckoning the cubit as the sacred cubit of Professor Piazzi Smyth) is exactly 300 feet; and its material is "jasper" (ἴασπις); which, from the supremacy given to it among the gems of Scripture, is probably what we know as the diamond. The apparent difficulty of surrounding a cube with a wall, if we suppose it to stand flat on one side, greatly confirms my suggestion that it is posed with a point above and a point below. Then the wall stands along the edge of the first foundation; which, like itself, is of diamond.

The wall is pierced by three gateways on each side, which, as they are never closed, must be considered as magnificent portals to the main broad-streets, each surmounted by an enormous globe of purest pearly lustre and iridescence, inscribed with a name of one of the Tribes of Israel. These gates are 350 miles apart; and so, consequently, are the great broad-streets: so that we may suppose myriads of subordinate streets, subdividing the area of the City. And, besides these, other streets and terraces, rising on beauteous arches and on pillars, mansion

(See my *Evenings at the Microscope*, p. 43). If it please God to ordain that lime be deposited, by any agency, after this pattern, though in a globe of a hundred yards' diameter,—it will be a perfect Pearl; —a fit gate, or portal, to bear the name of one of the honoured Tribes, and to be the terminus of a broad-street of lucid gold.

above mansion, tier above tier, even to the very summit of the vast pyramid.

We must not think of the glorified human body, as weighed down by our laws of gravity. Our Lord's raised body at the Ascension; and the bodies of the saints at the Rapture, teach us this. It may involve no more exertion to a denizen of the Holy City to pass from the floor to the summit of the pyramid than from one portal to another.

What is the use of these open gates? No stranger will ever be admitted there: nor will the perfected Bride ever be augmented. Yet some intercommunication between the heavenly and the earthly seems implied. The glory and honour of the nations and of their kings are brought to (εἰς) it; and this is said in connexion with the ever-open gates. And the leaves of the Tree of Life are transmitted to the nations, till death is wholly done away. Perhaps there may be a grand stairway, like that of Jacob's vision, leading from every pearly portal to the earth below. And, as an Angel is stationed at each, these may still be ministering spirits to redeemed men of the earthly family (cf. John i. 51).

Two remarkable features remain to be noticed; —the Water of Life, and the Tree of Life. From the Throne of God and of the Lamb, probably occupying the centre, proceeds a pure River of water of Life, running apparently in all directions, through each broad-street; as in Eden,

the River was parted, and became into four heads. In the earthly Paradise, too, was the wondrous Tree of Life, the communicator, sustainer, and pledge of immortality, even then, if man had but eaten of it. This, however, might not be. But now, lo! here is the mystic Tree, growing and fruiting in every street, beside those lambent Waters. And of its monthly variety of plenteous fruit, the Immortals freely eat, and live for ever.

What becomes of the River when it has permeated every street, and carried fertility to every Tree, and refreshment to every Mansion? Do its waters pour, as so many cascades, upon the earth? Or are they dissipated in the higher atmosphere, augmenting the copious rains with which the favoured Land shall be blessed? Let us not wonder that such a new Creation should have waters, and soil, and trees. For it will be a satellite, or world,[1] endowed, we may be sure, with all the conditions which can minister to the joy of its Citizens.

Best of all, the Throne of God and of the Lamb will be there: for the millennium certainly; probably for ever. As the City descends, a great

[1] Its diameter is half that of Mercury; three-fourths that of the Moon; and considerably more than of most of the satellites of Saturn. I suppose it will share, as the Moon does, the rotation of the Earth, always maintaining the same relation to her, of position and aspect. However, it is altogether supernatural.

Voice announces from heaven, "Behold, the Tabernacle of God is with men; and He will tabernacle with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself shall be with them, their God" (xxi. 3). This, too, fulfils Ezekiel xxxvii. 27; in which Jehovah, having engaged to set his "Sanctuary in the midst of Israel," says, as of something distinct and additional, "My Tabernacle *also* shall be over them."

"And there shall be no more any curse. And the Throne of God and of the Lamb shall be in it; and his Servants shall do Him priestly service, and shall see his Face; his Name being upon their foreheads. And there shall be no night there; and they have no need of lamp, or light of sun; for Jehovah God lighteth them, and they shall reign as kings, for ever and ever."

XXIV.

THE NEW EARTH.

At the Creation, "God separated the waters which were under the firmament from the waters which were above the firmament". Thus this globe was under a providential ordination which was very peculiar, "standing out of water, and through water" (2 Pet. iii. 5): so that, in the primitive ages, a vast assemblage of water, aeriform, it is true, not liquid, but capable of being condensed into liquid,—a pendulous ocean,—floated on high. This water, attenuated into mist or cloud, must have expanded to hundreds, or even thousands, of miles above the present atmosphere, *above* the firmament, and not *within* it. Such a condition of things, when seen from a suitable distance, probably presented an aspect very much like that of Jupiter in a good telescope, at present, with its enormous unstable belts of cloud.

This economy was not to be permanent; kept in their state of suspension "by the word of God," these upper stores of water at length descended, "whereby the *then* world (ὁ τότε κόσμος) perished." But they never returned to

a supra-firmamental position, remaining to form the present oceans; and the covenant-word of God is pledged that there shall no more be a flood of waters, to destroy the earth. "The *now* heavens and earth (*οἱ νῦν οὐρ. κ. ἡ γῆ*) by the same word are reserved for *fire.*"

It is not improbable that the great Conflagration, which Almighty God is "keeping in store to the perdition of ungodly men," may be the direct result of the descent of the New Jerusalem: the sudden rapid condensation of a vast volume of air educing heat which shall kindle into flame, and, spreading on every side, shall cause the earth and the works that are therein to be burned-up. "The heavens" shall be the special seat of the fire; and "the elements shall melt with fervent heat" (2 Pet. iii. 10, 12). The inspired language, both of the Apostle and of the Prophet (Isa. lxvi. 15) implies that the destruction will be no less universal than was that of the Flood. Jehovah will "by fire and by his sword plead with *all flesh;* and the slain . . . shall be many" (Cf. 2 Thess. i. 7–10): and this, expressly, as the result of the descent of the Lord with his saints.

Yet as, in the Flood, "a few persons were saved by means of water (*διεσ. δι' ὕδατος*); by an instrument probably beforehand unimaginable, because dependent on that which had not yet appeared,—so shall a remnant of Israel and of the nations ('the nations of the *saved,*' Rev.

xxi. 24) be, in some unknown manner, covered in the shadow of Jehovah's hand, when He plants the heavens, and lays the foundations of the earth" (Isa. li. 16) *anew*. It is when the dead men shall live; when the members of Jehovah-Jesus's dead body shall rise; and when the earth shall cast forth[1] the Giants (*Rephaim*),—that God's people are summoned to enter into their chambers, and shut their doors about them; —to hide themselves for a little moment, till the indignation be overpast (xxvi. 19—xxvii. 1). And a hint is given that some Isles of the sea will be this Sanctuary of Refuge: for, in that terrible chapter of the same Prophet (xxiv.) in which the details of the Judgment are accumulated with an awful intensity, terminating with the shutting-up of Satan and his hosts in the Abyss, and the Reign of Christ and his Saints, —there are some who glorify Jehovah with songs, in certain Isles of the sea, in the uttermost part of the earth, during the Fires. This is blessedly suggestive: but on it I dare not enlarge.

The Flaming Fire will not be destructive of the globe, nor even of its superficial structure, any more than was the Flood of Waters; but purgative and renovative, consuming the fruits of the Fall, physical and moral, and liberating elements which shall introduce a quite new constitution of Nature. "We look for New

[1] *Cast forth;* perhaps into the now patent Lake of Fire.

Heavens and a New Earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness"; and this "according to Promise" (2 Pet. iii. 13). The Promise had long been the theme of believers' hope; when the Meek shall inherit the earth, and delight themselves in the abundance of peace;—an inheritance for ever, the wicked being cut-off, and that so completely that his place on the earth, though diligently sought, shall not be found (Psa. xxxvii.).

The Apostle specially looks back to the Promise in Isaiah lxv., where the very words occur. "For, behold, I create New Heavens and a New Earth":—and then the Holy Ghost dilates on the earthly aspect. The New Heavens I presume to be the Holy City, New Jerusalem, the Lamb's Wife, containing the Throne of God and of the Lamb, already descended and manifest. The picture is now of the New Earth; one which the Spirit has delighted to portray, in many passages of this, and of the other Prophets, lingering, as it were, on the sweet details, and recurring again and again to it; showing how precious is this earth, and its human race, in God's thoughts; and how the Eternal Word's "delights in the sons of men" (Prov. viii. 31) will yet be filled to the full in it. There shall be the eradication of sorrow and crying, and their replacement by rejoicing; of disappointment by satisfaction and rest; of death and decay by immortal youth;[1]

[1] At least *incipiently*; and, after a thousand years, fully and irrevocably.

the restoration of the paradisaic state (if not of *something better still*, because established in the Resurrection of the God-Man), when the Creator could "rest and be refreshed" in what He pronounced *very good*. The New Heavens and Earth will be *created*: בָּרָא, *bara*, is the word used in Isaiah lxv. 17, 18; which is employed in Genesis i., and elsewhere, for the calling of things into existence. It is not unreasonable to suppose that the whole terrene surface will be enlarged by the absorption or concealment of the ocean; that its fertility, beauty, and general enjoyableness will be vastly augmented; that a great number of both animals and plants, now existing, particularly such as are hurtful or annoying to man or to other creatures, will be annihilated; and that many new species of animals and plants fitted for enjoyment, and for affording help and pleasure to man, and for eliciting his sympathies, will be created. That some animals will remain, however, typically, and, so to speak, representatively, predaceous and destructive,—as the lion, the leopard, the wolf, the bear, and various kinds of venomous serpents,—is distinctly and repeatedly predicted; yet with their noxious characteristics absolutely annulled.

Since the continued existence of such creatures under such conditions has afforded no small scope for the ridicule of infidels, and even for the painful doubts of believers, the subject may be worthy of a somewhat careful examination.

Those who object to the literal fulfilment of these predictions, on the ground that every part of the organization of an animal is adapted to its habits and appetites, so that it would be a physical impossibility for a lion to digest vegetable food, forget that the domestic cat and dog—typical *Carnivora*—are pledges and earnests, even in the present state, of the possibility which is thus denied.[1] It may be replied that these animals are in an unnatural condition: that the whole organization,—the eyes, the teeth, the talons, the flexible spine, the strong limbs, the hard bones, the rotatory joints, the firm muscles,—is thrown away. Granting this to the full, still, these familiar examples prove the possibility of animals subsisting comfortably in a state for which their whole organization is ill-adapted. It might be allowed that the *Carnivora* were created expressly for a state in which death is the rule; and that, if they

[1] Majendie found that carnivora can subsist awhile on food wholly destitute of *nitrogen;* and much longer if this element be supplied from other sources; their excretions becoming altered, and assimilated to those of herbivorous animals. And Hunter is said to have changed, not merely the function, but even the structure, of the stomach of a sea-gull, a fish-eating bird, into those of a pigeon, a seed-eating bird, by feeding it exclusively on grain. And Holmgrén again reversed the experiment by feeding pigeons, for a lengthened period, on a fish-diet;—with the result that the gizzard became transformed into a carnivorous stomach.

existed before the Fall, their proper functions were held in supernatural suspension; as perhaps they will be after the Restitution.

Yet we are not restricted to this supposition. For nitrogenous elements are even now supplied by many vegetables;[1] and, in the New Creation, many herbs and fruits may be produced, which will yield nitrogenous and carbonaceous aliments, as agreeable to the taste, and as nutritious, to what are now carnivorous animals, as flesh. And it is quite conceivable that the procuring of these may bring into healthful and pleasant exercise the peculiar bodily structure just alluded to, now required for the capture of living prey; such as the well-knit muscles, the flexible spine, the short versatile limbs, the acute claws, the pointed teeth; all which may, in various degrees, be ancillary to climbing high trees, tearing open the thick bark, tapping the flowing milk, wrenching

[1] Foods mainly consist of four principles,—oxygen, hydrogen, carbon, and nitrogen. The predominance of *carbon* is characteristic of vegetable matter; of *nitrogen* characteristic of animal matter. *Fibrin*, which is an essential element of blood, exists largely in certain tropical fruits, as in the Papaw (*Carica papaya*), in the copious sap of the Milk-tree (*Galactodendron*) of South America, and in *Fungi*. *Albumen* copiously in the fruit of the *Ochro* (*Hibiscus esculentus*). *Osmazome*, or *creatin*, an element of animal muscle, largely in many mushrooms. *Gluten*, a substance very rich in nitrogen, is yielded abundantly by cereal grains, beans and peas, coffee, and many other seeds, and also by cabbage and allied plants. All these are *nitrogenous* elements.

off, and carrying down, great succulent fruits, and biting them to pieces, or carrying up to a height, and then dropping them, for splitting heavy wooden shells full of fat-like nuts.[1]

[1] These are not imaginary suggestions. There are even now, as hinted in the preceding note, trees in the great tropical forests, which yield highly nutritive nitrogenous aliments. The great nut of the Butter-tree of India (*Bassia butyracea*) contains a pulp, much valued, having the appearance and qualities of the best lard. Another species, the Shea-tree of West Africa, is similar, but the pulp of its nut is firmer, and, according to Park, of finer flavour than the best butter of cows. The immense fruit of the Eastern Archipelago, known as the Durian, and others of the order *Sterculaceæ*, are reputed to have much affinity with animal matters. The juices of the fruit known in the West Indies and tropical America as the Papaw abound in fibrin (as already mentioned), and can scarcely be distinguished, in chemical analysis, from animal substance.

There are, moreover, many trees in the tropics, slightly known to botanists, but familiarly recognized by the natives as Cow-trees; because, when the bark is deeply wounded, a thick milk- or cream-like fluid is discharged in copious abundance, which is found to be palatable and highly nutritious. That of the Cow-tree of Caracas is very thick, resembling the milk from a cow after calving; it is grateful to the taste and smell, and *deposits a fibrous cheese*, with many properties of animal matter. This is a species of *Brosimum:* but there are others of the orders *Apocyneæ* (in Guiana), and *Asclepiadeæ* (in Ceylon).

Recent investigations, especially those of Prof. Falkland, have shown the comparative value of various articles of food in producing *force*. In his tables, while some farinaceous substances, as flour, oatmeal, and pea-

"The heifer and the bear shall feed *together*" (Isa. xi. 7; *Lowth*); which implies the partaking of food in common; and, in xxx. 23, 24, this cattle-food is described as corn, threshed and winnowed, of unusual goodness, "fat and plenteous." The lion "shall eat *straw*, like the ox": perhaps occasionally; he will be able to digest it: not that he will be confined to the dried culms of cultivated *gramineæ*. The ox himself requires something more than *straw*. But perhaps this term may include pea-haulm, or even unwinnowed grain. At Creation *all* the terrestrial animals fed on "every green herb" (Gen. i. 30); while to man were given seeds, grains, and fruits. But what the virgin earth produced, of herbs or fruits, what do we know? What does modern Botany know of the Trees of Knowledge and of Life?[1]

I have adduced, in the margin, many examples

meal, stand high, they are much exceeded by oils; and these not only animal, as fat and butter, but vegetable, as cocoa-nibs, which rank almost exactly with butter. (*Brougton*, in *Intell. Obs.* ix. 460.)

[1] The ancient heathen nations had preserved the tradition of a Golden Age, in which the most savage and venomous animals,—the very creatures named by the Sacred Prophets, the lion, the wolf, the bear, the serpent, the viper,—lived in peaceful harmlessness; and they looked forward to a return of these auspicious times. Bishop Lowth, in his Notes on Isa. xi., has cited passages from the Greek and Roman, the Arabian and Persian, poets, which abundantly prove this fact. But surely it is very remarkable!

of what possibilities still exist in the present ruined and groaning Creation: for it is sometimes well to be "able to put to silence the ignorance of foolish men." But the believer must remember that the conditions in question are those of a New Creation. The modification of instincts, functions, and powers, is surely as easy to Omnipotence as original creation: and, since Redemption will ever be a theme for Jehovah's glory, so it may well consist with his wisdom that certain of the creatures retain structures, which are commemorative of the Ruin, long after it has been removed. The terms in which the Holy Ghost speaks of the association of the predaceous with the domestic creatures, seem to imply a participation in their domesticity. It is probable that, as redeemed Man extends his inhabitation of the earth, the co-existence of truly wild and independent animals will cease;—perhaps at the final post-millennial Renovation of all things; and those alone be preserved which can find their satisfaction in ministering to Man's enjoyment, in some way or other.

However, we are not without a divine Oracle on the creation of life-sustaining plants, hitherto unknown on the earth. The great earthquake, that will attend the Descent of the Lord, will cleave the Mount of Olives, so as to make a very great valley through it. At the same time living waters shall go out from Jerusalem, divid-

ing presently into two Rivers, of which one branch will run to the Mediterranean, and the other to the Dead Sea (Zech. xiv. 4; 8).

The procession of these waters, in both their "streams," will be for the joy of the City of God, when Jehovah-Jesus reigns in her (Psa. xlvi. 4). Joel (iii. 18) speaks of the Eastern River, as watering the Valley of Shittim, by which is probably meant the Plain of Moab, the flat region, east of the Dead Sea. But he associates with this new-formed River the fulness of all the rivers of Judah, and the augmented fertility of the vine-clad mountains and pastoral hills.

To the Prophet Ezekiel, however (xlvii.), we owe the fullest description of this Eastern River, which will probably be the main branch. It issues from under the Sanctuary, which, therefore, is already built, and occupied by the Divine Glory (xliii.). At first a small and shallow rivulet, it rapidly acquires breadth and depth, as it runs through the new-made Valley; till, before it has proceeded two miles, it is "a river to swim in, that cannot be forded." So it proceeds eastward, through what is now a region of broken hills, to the lower desert portion of the Jericho Plain, pouring at length its volume of living water into the Dead Sea, at some point of its N.W. corner. The earthquake will, doubtless, have greatly changed the surface of the intermediate regions, and probably have once more depressed the rocky barrier at the south end of

the Ghor, so as to open, as anciently, the communication with the Red Sea and Indian Ocean, through the Wady Arabah. Thus, what commercial speculation is at present debating will be accomplished; but it will be by the presence of the glorious Lord himself, not by man-subscribed capital, when Zion has become "a quiet habitation, a Tabernacle that shall never be taken down": it will be "a place of broad rivers and streams, wherein shall go no galley with oars, neither shall gallant ship pass thereby" (Isa. xxxiii. 20, 21): no Indian steamer, no iron-clad, shall divide those sacred waves.

And that yawning pit of bitumen and salt; that memorial of vengeance, and type of Gehenna, the Dead Sea, shall be healed; save that the marshes of the west border shall be reserved for the supply of salt. It will be thenceforth the head of the Gulf of Akabah; and it will be abundantly supplied with marine fishes of many kinds, available for food.[1]

But perhaps the most interesting result of the Procession of the Waters, and that which most concerns the subject of this Essay, is that, on each bank of the River, from its source (ver. 7), grow trees, even of many kinds (12), of unfading

[1] The mention of fishers spreading their nets is a proof that the condition contemplated is not final: since man's life will still be sustained by animal death. Not until after the Thousand Years, will the New Earth be fully inaugurated.

verdure, and unfailing fruitfulness; every month bringing forth new fruit, which shall be available for food, while the leaves shall be for medicine. Thus the trees seem to be the earthly representatives of those which adorn the River in the Heavenly City; even as this healing stream is the counterpart of that; for while that proceeds out of the Throne of God, this issues forth from the Sanctuary.

XXV.

THE COLONIZATION OF WORLDS.

THERE is a belief loosely held by many, that, after the Judgment of the Great White Throne, at the close of the Millennium, all the wicked having been committed to the Lake of Fire, the righteous on earth shall be transferred to the Heavenly City, and this globe be finally annihilated. And science is supposed to countenance this anticipation.

Yet throughout Holy Scripture there runs a great catena of divine Oracles, which announce the eternal continuance of the Earth, and of man upon it. I have already referred to some of these,[1] and will here cite but one or two more. In Psalm xxxvii., the reiterated promises to the meek, the righteous, are that they shall dwell in *the land*, shall inherit *the earth*, and delight themselves in the abundance of peace; and that *for ever*. So in Isaiah lx. 21, the people "shall inherit the land *for ever*"; *everlasting* joy shall

[1] Page 28 *supra*. In "Outlines of Unfulfilled Prophecy," Mr. Birks has brought together sixty-three of these predictions. Yet he has not by any means exhausted the list.

be upon them (xxxv. 10; li. 11; lxi. 7); Jerusalem shall be an *eternal* excellency (lx. 15). So, again, "I will cause you to dwell . . . in the land that I gave to your fathers, *for ever and ever*" (Jer. vii. 7). In Ezekiel (xxxvii. 26) Jehovah makes a Covenant of Peace with the restored nation; "it shall be an *everlasting* covenant with them; and I will place them, and *multiply* them, and will set my Sanctuary in the midst of them *for evermore.*" The word used is עוֹלָם, *ngolam*, constantly employed to express the eternity of God himself.[1] These abundantly suffice to verify the statement that Jehovah's Truth is pledged to an eternal inhabitation of this globe by the human race.

But the time will come when Death shall be done away. For "He will swallow up death in victory, and the Lord Jehovah will wipe away tears from off all faces; and the rebuke of his people shall He take away from off *all the earth*" (Isa. xxv. 8).

Now it might well be that this blessed population, though large, would yet be limited to a definite number, never to be diminished by

[1] If science denies this, asserting that "the Earth will gradually lose its energy of rotation, as well as that of revolution round the sun; that the sun itself will wax dim, and become useless as a source of energy; . . . and that the whole visible universe will become a lifeless mass" (*Unseen Universe*); we reply, He who made it is well able to keep his promise.

death, because endowed with an immortal bloom of youthful prime; but equally incapable of augmentation by natural increase; the perpetual dwellers upon earth sharing the angelic nature, neither marrying nor giving in marriage. That this will be the case with the glorified denizens of the Heavenly City, I do not doubt: the Bride, the Lamb's Wife, will be absolutely complete at the marriage, and will never (so far as is revealed) be augmented by one individual. But, if it be so with the earthly Family, then surely this terrible result must follow:—taking the entire race that have lived since the Fall, the finally lost cannot but outnumber the saved; and that vastly, even including the heavenly and the earthly Families: and, *in that aspect*, the balance of victory must certainly remain with Death and Hell!

But such is not the revealed Purpose of God. The blessed and beloved inhabitants of the New Earth will, under the divine favour, "be fruitful, and multiply, and *replenish* the earth." The Covenant of Peace, just alluded to, expressly stipulates this: "they shall dwell therein, even they, and their children, and their children's children, for ever" (Cf. Psa. ciii. 17). The august response made by the Father to the mourning appeal of the Man of Sorrows (Psa. cii. 24–28) contains this assurance, "The children of thy servants shall continue, and their seed shall be established before thee": and this to

be when the heavens and the earth have been folded up like a garment, and been renewed.

After Jerusalem has become the City of Truth, and Jehovah has returned to Zion, dwelling in the midst of her, "the streets of the city shall be full of boys and girls playing in the streets thereof" (Zech. viii. 3–5). "They shall not labour in vain, nor bring forth for trouble [nor generate a short-lived race; *Lowth*]; for they are the seed of the blessed of Jehovah, and their offspring with them" (Isa. lxv. 23). Moreover, in the light of all these passages we may read the sweet Psalm cxxviii., whose scene is surely Jerusalem, under the reign of the King of Righteousness and King of Peace. "Thy wife shall be as a fruitful vine by the sides of thy house; thy children like olive-plants round about thy table. . . Yea, thou shalt see thy children's children, and peace upon Israel."

But let us look carefully at these conditions of existence, each of which appears to be irrefragably secured by "The Amen, the faithful and true Witness, the beginning of the Creation of God." A globe, of limited dimensions, is inhabited by a race, begetting children, in which death is unknown. Granting that, in some way or other, the sea has vanished, perhaps bridged-over with a crust of solid land, and that all this great addition to the habitable surface, as well as what are now stony and sandy deserts, has been made to "rejoice and blossom as

the rose" (Isa. xxxv. 1). What is the result? The certain, absolutely inevitable result? When Jehovah "shall cause them that come of Jacob to take root, Israel shall blossom and bud, and fill the face of the world with fruit" (Isa. xxvii. 6). Do we ask, what fruit? Surely none other than human fruit; "the fruit of the womb"; Israel's living swarming descendants.

With this fruit he is to "*fill* the world": and it is easy to see that no incalculable duration of ages will be required to accomplish this.[1]

[1] A series of elaborate calculations appeared a year or two ago in "*Knowledge*," on the increase of the Earth's population under certain circumstances. Thus, supposing 10 adults to begin with, and population to increase uniformly, at the rate of $1\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. per ann. [*i.e.* every 200 persons to increase the population by 3 every year],—in 4000 years it would amount to 731 millions of millions of millions of millions. Supposing the whole surface of the globe available as standing-room, and allowing 10 persons to each square yard, these millions would require 120,000 millions of such globes as this earth, merely to stand on.

The most densely peopled region in the world is East Flanders, which maintains 700 persons to the square mile. Supposing the whole earth's population to be 1500 millions, and to increase at the rate of $1\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. per ann.,—in 214 years the whole world would be stocked as densely as is now East Flanders. (*Knowledge:* i. 575, 584, ii. 3.) Josephus declares, perhaps with some exaggeration, that Jerusalem held, on some occasions of her "solemn feasts," between two and three millions of persons: and Jehovah announces that, *according to this standard* (Ezek. xxxvi. 38), "shall the waste cities be filled with flocks of men."

The time must come when the world will contain no more, without painful crowding, which would not consist with that more than paradisaic delight which will be the invariable rule throughout the Dominion of Jehovah-Jesus, then.

Nor will the result be essentially altered by the *rate* of increase. Suppose this what we will: let but one child be born in the whole world in a year, or but one in a century, since there is no death, and eternity, *i.e.* duration without end, is before them, the time must come when the world will contain no more.

And what then? Only two alternatives appear conceivable. Either the globe itself must steadily and endlessly grow in proportion to the increasing population,—which, though not impossible,[1] is unlikely; or, there must be—COLONIZATION.

This seems the resource predetermined and prepared by the Almighty God. I cannot, indeed, quote any text from Scripture, which distinctly states this; but several circumstances make it highly probable. The human race is

[1] Meteoric bodies, in billions of tons' weight, are rushing round the sun, and, by mutual collision, falling upon it; probably with the effect of supplying the waste caused by the constant emission of light and heat; and possibly augmenting its volume and its gravity. They fall on the planets, too; but with scarcely appreciable result.

already familiar with this device. For centuries the crowding peoples of the old world have been seeking ampler room and space in new worlds before unknown. But where will Americas and Australias be sought when the globe is full? In the PLANETS.

Since the invention of the telescope, and the discovery that some of the points of light above us are worlds, having much in common with this earth,—the question has been often mooted, Are those globes the seats of organization, the habitations of sentient, or intelligent, or responsible creatures? Scients of the highest eminence have discussed the point, and arguments *for* and *against* the probability have been freely interchanged. The preponderance of opinion has been in the affirmative, until of late years; when higher telescopic powers, and more numerous, accurate, and protracted examinations, have made it more and more improbable that the Planets are the habitations of living creatures at all resembling man.

Of Mercury and Venus we know little or nothing that bears on this question; whether they have an atmosphere or not is as yet a mooted point.[1] Their nearness to the sun seems to be-

[1] "Dr. Whewell (*Plur. Worlds*, 194) has a curious theory, that, in the planets mentioned there is neither air nor water, these being driven off into space by the intense heat of the sun. That, in the great planets, Jupiter, Saturn, Uranus, and Neptune, there is no solid

speak an intensity of heat and light intolerable to beings constituted as we are. The Moon appears to be a volcanic cinder, with neither air nor water; at least on the surface which we behold. Mars, of all the heavenly orbs, seems to possess physical conditions most nearly analogous to ours. Yet the latest discoveries on this Planet, —the very remarkable duplications of long slender parallel lines,—announced by Prof. Schiaparelli of Milan (see *Nature*, May 4, 1882), are thought to imply, on the surface of Mars, a character very unlike anything pertaining to our Earth.[1]

The very low specific gravity of the great outer worlds,—Saturn's vast bulk being far lighter than water, and Jupiter's not much heavier,— seems to preclude any solidity in them, save perhaps a central nucleus. Each probably con-

matter, but merely water, either in a fluid or a vaporous condition, or both. That, in the Earth alone (and perhaps Mars), there are the conditions of life:—ground to stand upon, air to breathe; water to nourish vegetables, and, thus, animals; and solid matter to supply materials for their more solid parts; and with this a due supply of light and heat; a due energy of the force of weight."

"The Earth's orbit is the temperate zone of the Solar System"; the inner planets forming the torrid zone, the outer the frigid. Moreover he contends that the earth is really the largest *solid* planet in the system: since the vast orbs of Jupiter, Saturn, Uranus, and Neptune are constituted mainly of water and gases, clouds and vapours (198).

[1] Mr. Proctor suggests vast engineering works (*Knowledge*, I. xxiv. 519):—*vast*, however, indeed!

sists mainly of water and vapour; or perhaps of fire and smoke.[1] The living astronomer so often quoted, whose opinion commands deserved deference, has said, "We must of course, dismiss the idea that the Giant Planet is, at present, a fit abode for living creatures" (*Other Worlds*, 141).

It is not fit *at present*, says the scient; but perhaps it may become fit. I venture to suggest that not only the Planets and Satellites of this system, but the Sun itself,—nay, the millions of Suns, that, to our eyes, are but specks in space,—(yet each one, perhaps, with its system of planets and satellites) are none of them habitable as yet, but are being prepared by God for habitation; each in succession to be got ready for Colonization from Earth, by Adam's race. That God is, we may say, furnishing his great House of many Mansions, of which one small apartment alone is yet occupied.

If I be asked how living, breathing human

[1] Dr. Whewell thinks Jupiter wholly watery, save a central cinder (*Plur. Worlds*, 138). Mr. Proctor thinks this *not likely*, but does not deny it. His opinion is that the belts which we see are enormous vapours, not raised by solar heat, but by some vast unknown forces acting from below, unlike any familiar to us. He concludes "that Jupiter is still a glowing mass, fluid probably throughout, bubbling and seething with the intensity of the primeval fires, sending up continually enormous masses of cloud to be gathered into bands by the swift rotation of the Planet" (*Other Worlds*, 142);—in fact, a sort of universal volcano.

bodies can possibly be transferred from world to world, I reply, I have no conception, how. But if man himself has invented means of travelling across oceans; of floating in the air; of living for hours under water; of conversing audibly across hundreds of miles; of conveying written messages thousands of miles in a minute,—I am quite sure the Omnipotent God will find no difficulty in conveying men through stellar space, when He pleases. And there are some Sacred Words, which seem to say that He will do so. "Israel shall be saved in Jehovah with an everlasting salvation: ye shall not be ashamed or confounded unto the ages of eternity. For thus saith Jehovah that created the Heavens; God himself that formed the Earth and made it;—He established it; He created it not in vain; He formed it to be inhabited" (Isa. xlv. 17, 18). We might, indeed, infer, by parity of reasoning, that what the creation of the earth implies, the creation of other globes implies; but Jehovah's own mention of "the heavens" seems to force us to this conclusion. And the grand appeal in xl. 26, where He directs attention to the heavenly orbs, telling us that He bringeth out their host *by number*, and calleth them all *by names*, suggests that they have a great *individual* interest and importance in his estimation; and that redeemed Israel is somehow concerned in this. The same sentiment occurs, too, in Psalm cxlvii. 4; and is there immediately associated with the restoring, build-

ing, and healing, of Israel;—an association of ideas, which seems at first sight, strangely irrelevant.

Some of the Stars visible to us are far more glorious than our Sun. The star known as α Centauri is double, consisting of two suns revolving around each other, of which the larger has a diameter more than half as great again as our sun. But Sirius, the well-known Dog-star, is calculated to be a blazing globe of fourteen times the diameter of our sun. Of what planetary systems may these be the centres!

By the recently invented spectroscope Astronomers can now so analyse the rays of light that come to us, as to determine the nature of the elements from which they radiate. Thus it is ascertained that, throughout the Planets of this system, there exist such metals as iron, such elements as hydrogen, such compounds as soda and lime; and many more, which are common to the earth; and, further, that these exist in the Sun; and, yet further, that they exist also in the fixed stars, as Sirius, Betelgeux, and Aldebaran. From these facts it seems legitimate to infer that all the Celestial Globes, however they may vary in their accidents, are radically of the same essence, formed on the same pattern, and destined to the same office.

The human eye, aided by the mighty telescopes of modern construction, defines stars in thin clouds of light, immeasurably distant, perhaps in

the very first processes of condensation : and still discerns other subtler clouds, which cannot be so discriminated. We may presume other *nebulæ*, and other clusters, far beyond these, of which no trace has as yet been discerned. *Space seems to be absolutely infinite.* And, as the interplanetary space is apparently crowded everywhere with cosmical matter, solid, fluid, or gaseous,—so probably is the unbounded interstellar space filled with matter capable of being condensed, adapted, or in some way used, to the ultimate needs of the human race.

If this world, with all that it contains, was really created but 6000 years ago, as the plain Word of God declares, — still the whole ages of previous organic (and also inorganic) being, which Geologists plead for, must have existed, *in the Plan of God,* prochronically. And we may legitimately conceive of the nebular hypothesis of Laplace, as representing the grand Plan of the Eternal Mind, so long as we admit that Creation must have occurred at *some* moment; before which Time was not, and derived being was not. Creation would thus be the sudden bursting into a circle; and millions of worlds might, in that moment, begin to be, in all possible stages of progress, every one with an antiquity, greater or less, but unreal, imaginary, *prochronic.* Thus Mars is considered to be at present in a condition analogous to a long-past state of the Earth : Jupiter and Saturn in conditions "far earlier;

i.e. less cooled and less modified states of planetary being."[1]

Mr. Proctor, in a most interesting and able article, entitled, "A New Theory of the Universe,"[2] propounds that all the visible stars, clusters, and nebulæ (stellar, irresolvable, gaseous), form parts of one single System; and alludes to evidence "of processes leading to the formation of Suns, of greater or less splendour and magnitude; of streams and clusters of small stars; and of systems in which suns and stellar streams and clusters seem to be intermingled." He advocates, if I do not misunderstand him, the probability that every member of the starry universe is, even now, in process of development.

"FOR OF HIM, AND THROUGH HIM, AND TO HIM, ARE ALL THINGS: TO WHOM BE GLORY FOR EVER!"

"HAVING MADE KNOWN UNTO US THE MYSTERY OF HIS WILL, ACCORDING TO HIS GOOD PLEASURE WHICH HE HATH PURPOSED IN HIMSELF; THAT, IN THE DISPENSATION OF THE FULNESS OF THE TIMES, HE WOULD HEAD-UP ALL THINGS IN THE CHRIST,—BOTH THOSE WHICH ARE IN THE HEAVENS, AND THOSE UPON THE EARTH: EVEN IN HIM, IN WHOM WE ALSO HAVE INHERITED."

[1] *The Student*, iv. 379.

[2] *Ibid.*, iii. 186; see also some observations of great interest on stellar and planetary nebulæ, in an Article on "Mountain Observatories," in the "Edinburgh Review" for October, 1884.

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